Shuzo Oshimi

Blood on the Tracks

volume 15

Blood on the Tracks

volume 15

Shuzo Oshimi

CHAPTER 128 Typhoon 003

CHAPTER 129 Cat 027

CHAPTER 130 Night Together 051

CHAPTER 131 That House 075

CHAPTER 132 The Other Side 099

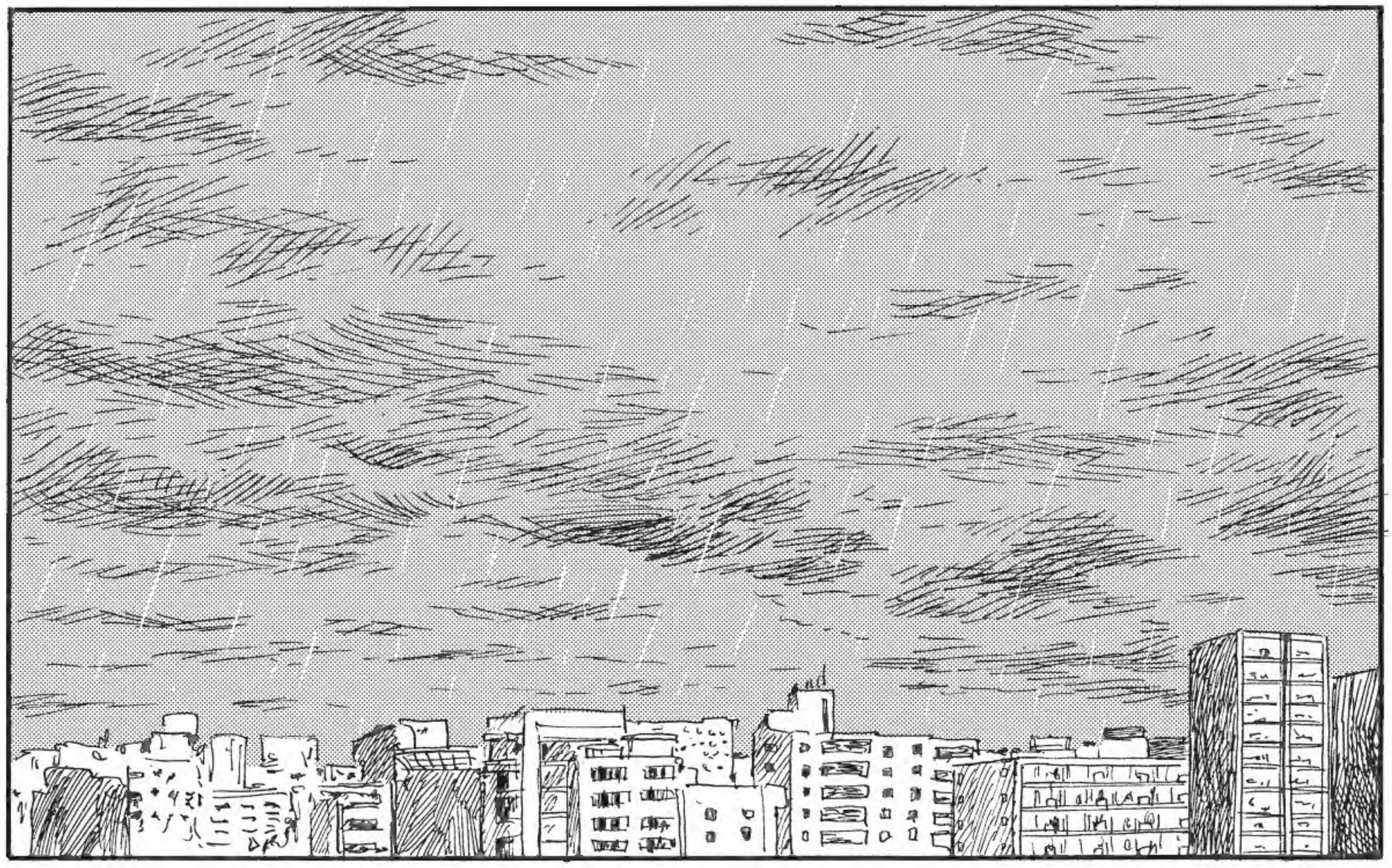
CHAPTER 133 Naked 123

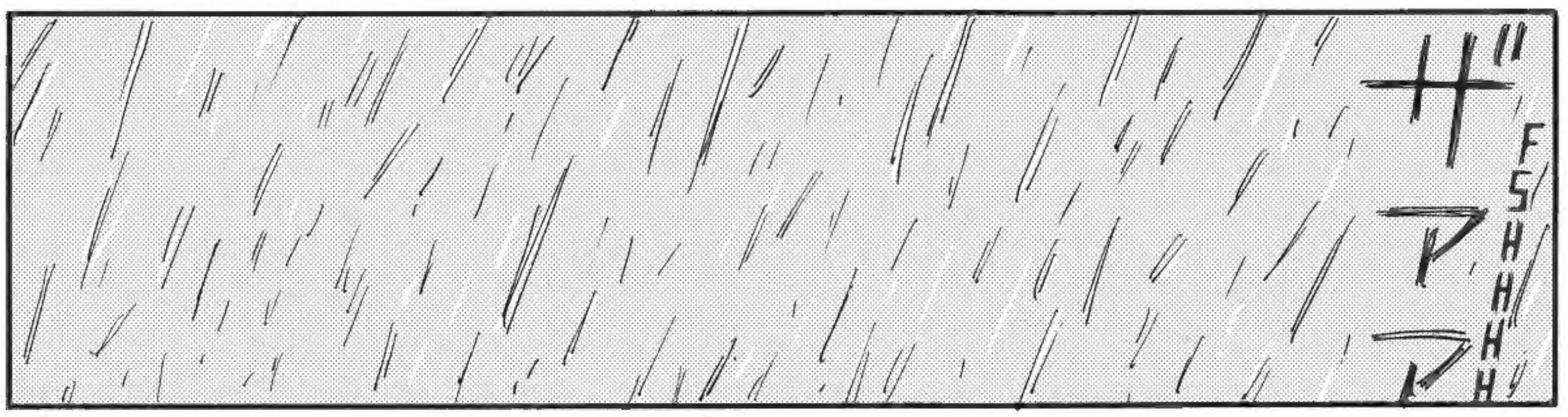
CHAPTER 134 Blessing 147

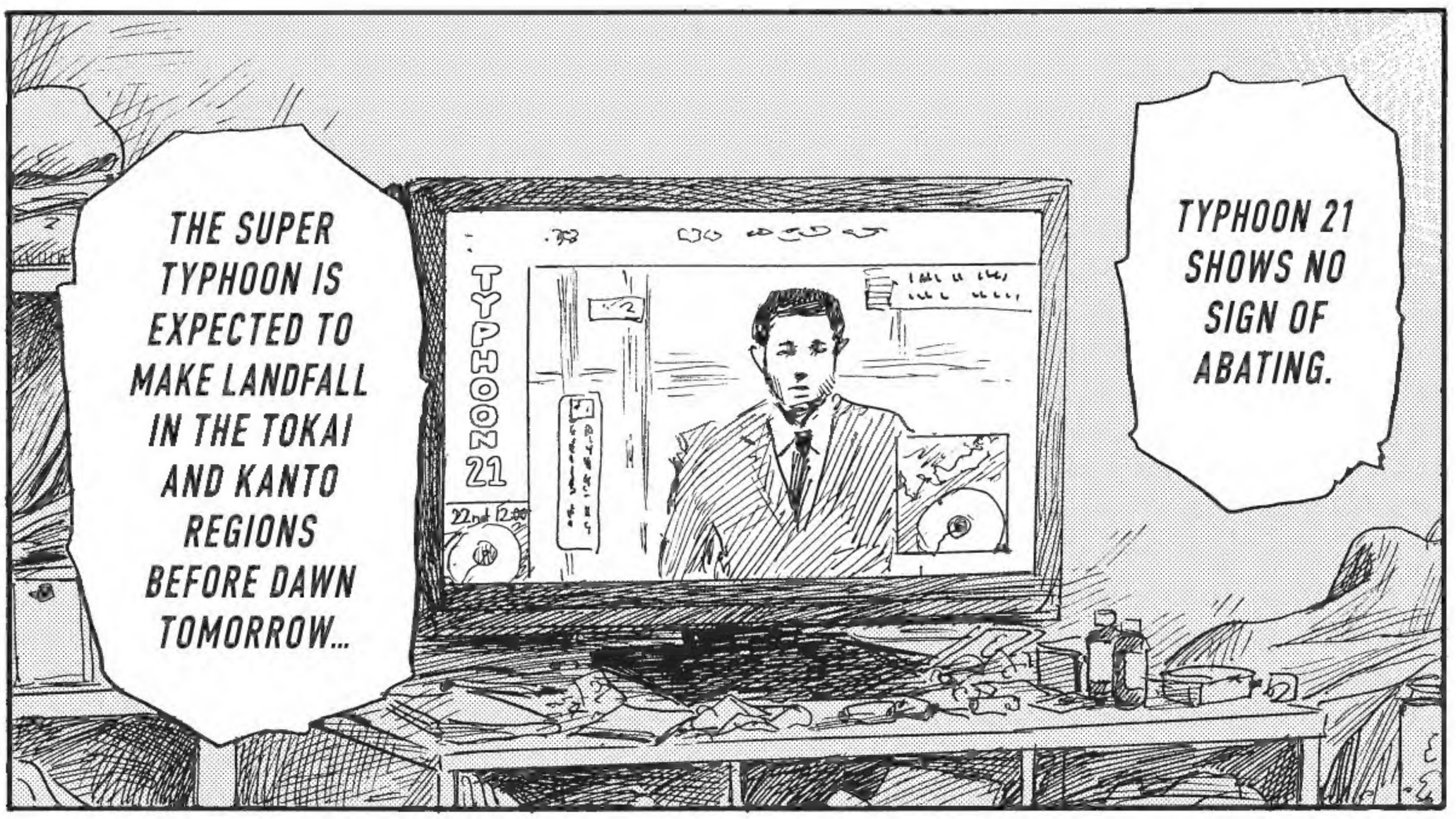
CHAPTER 135 Far Away 171

CHAPTER 136 That Place 195

DADA
DONK
DADA
DONK




SHHHH


THE SUPER TYPHOON IS EXPECTED TO MAKE LANDFALL IN THE TOKAI AND KANTO REGIONS BEFORE DAWN TOMORROW...
TYPHOON 21
TYPHOON 21 SHOWS NO SIGN OF ABATING.

THE JMA URGES UTMOST CAUTION...

ドアアア FSHHHH

IT'S BEEN TWO MONTHS ALREADY.

THE TYPHOON'S ALMOST HERE.

COME ON.

LET'S GO SEE AUNT SEIKO.

...I'M NOT GOING.

TUMP

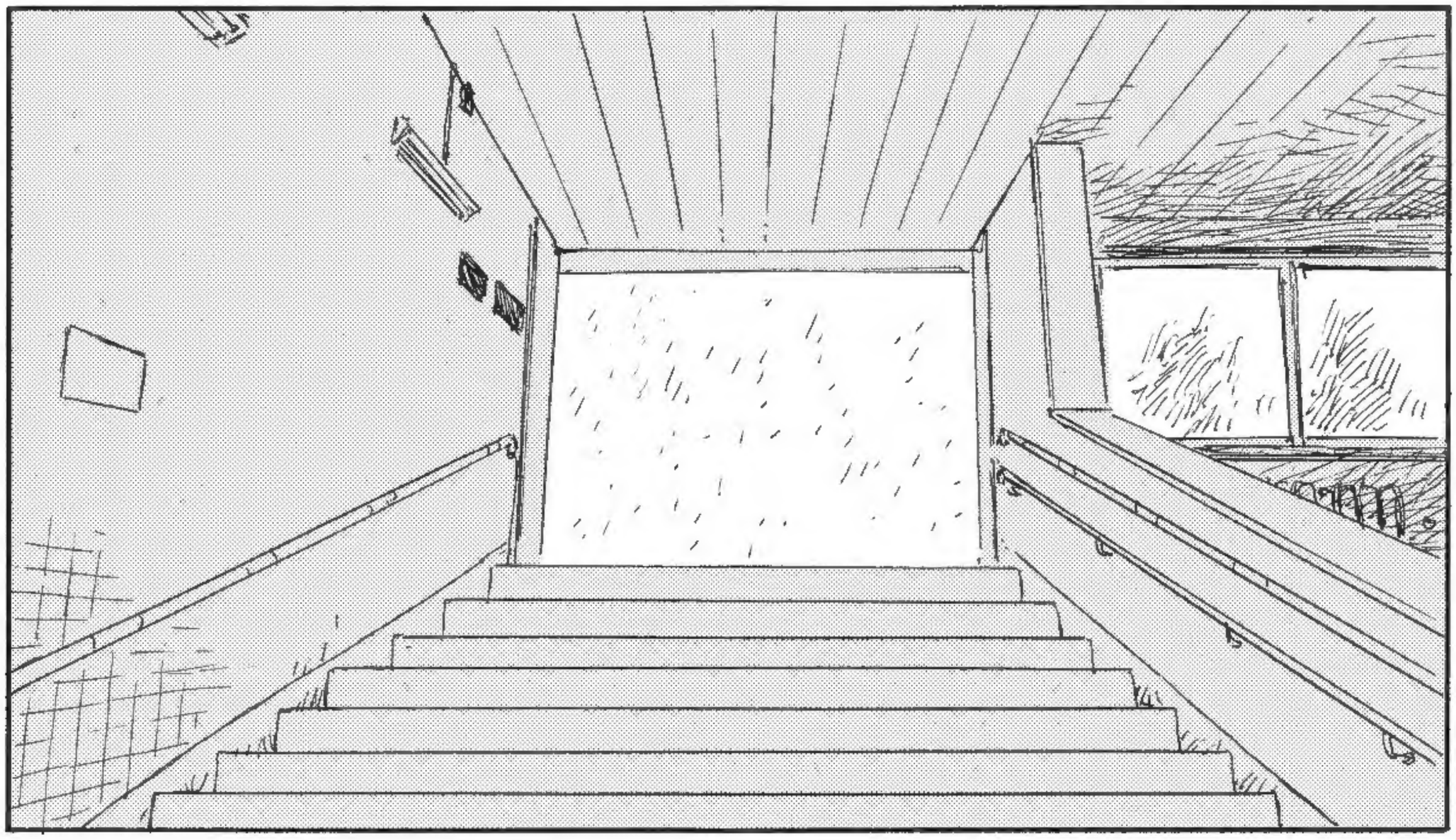
TUMP

TUMP

LET'S GO!

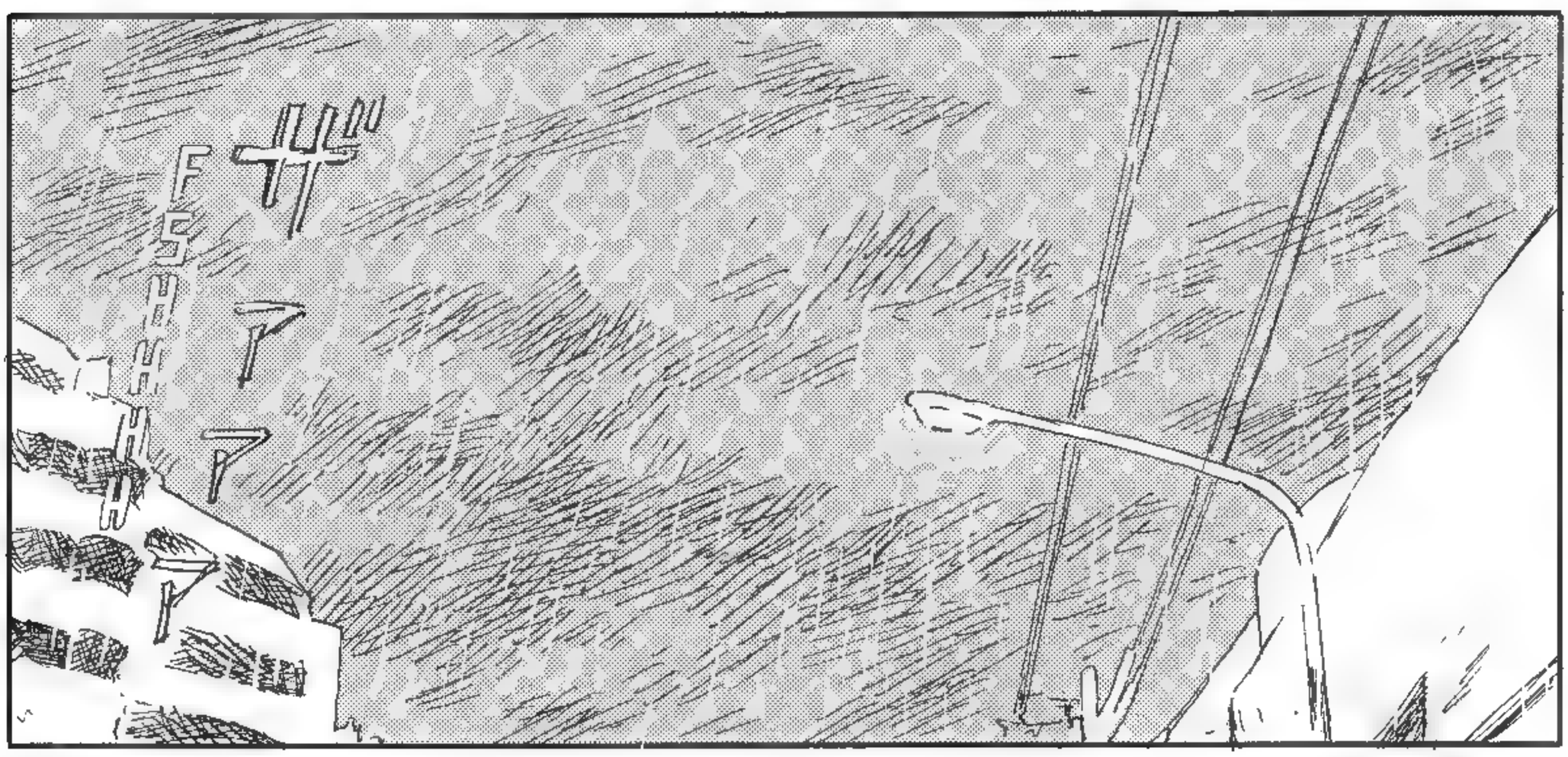
SEI!

LET'S GO!



落合駅
Ochiai Sta.

UNIVERSAL
DRUG
STORE
BEAUTY · COSMETICS
WHUNK


FSHHH

I might actually hit her this time.

I might kill her.

What am I doing?

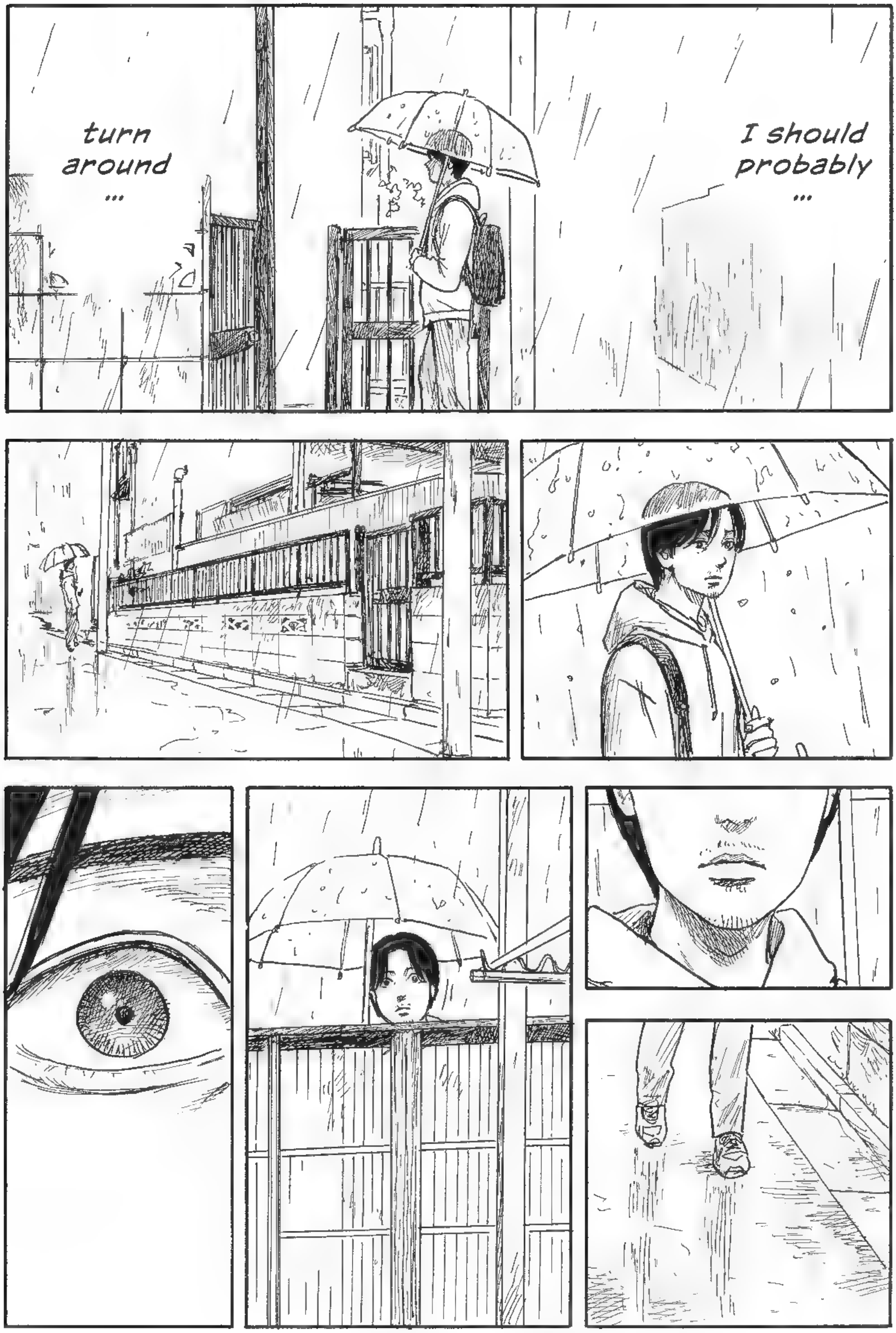
What do I hope to get out of seeing her again?

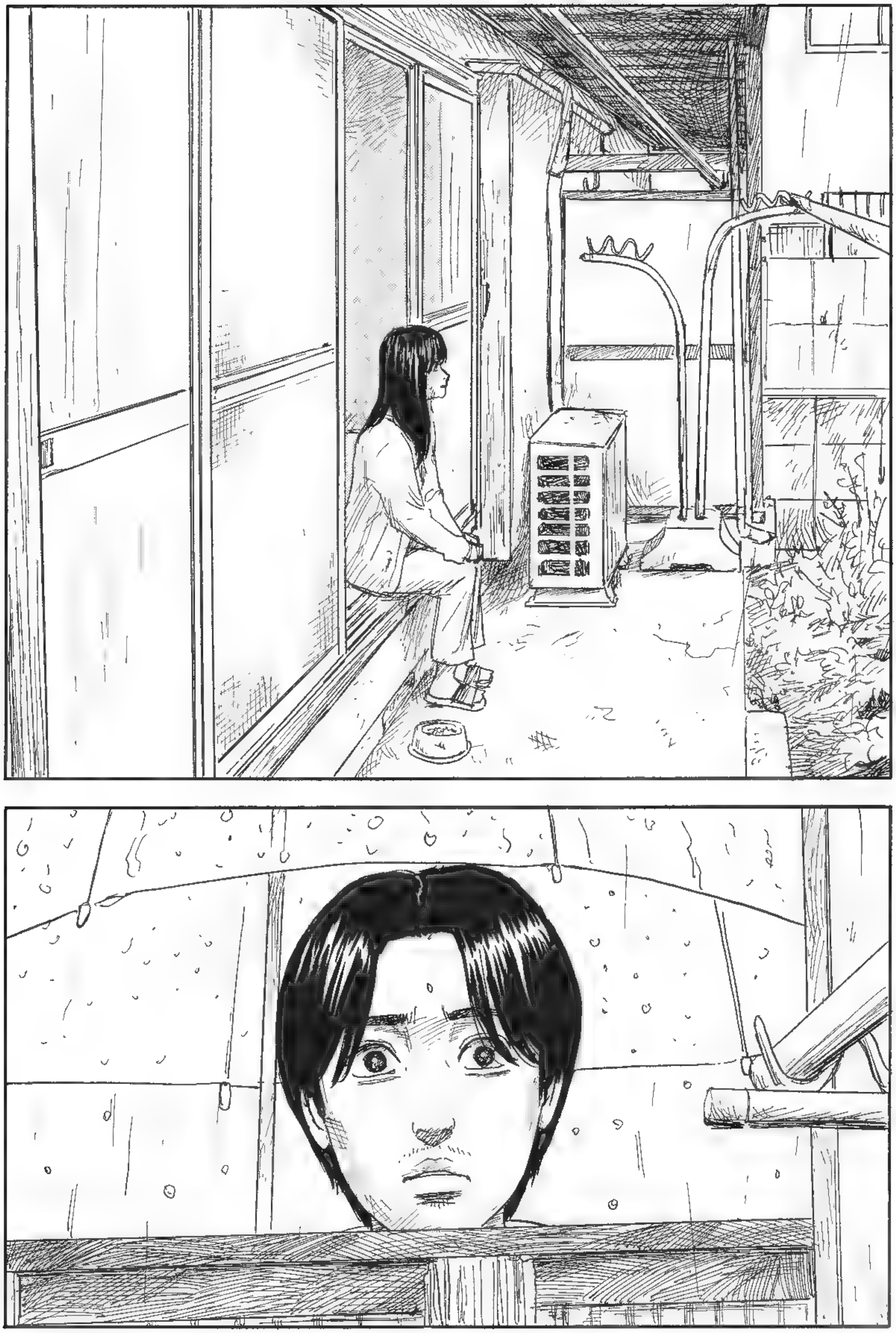
then I could die, too.

But maybe that's for the best?

If I killed her,

KREE


turn around ...
I should probably ...



SEEN A CAT?

HAVE YOU

...

HUH?

WHERE'D THE POOR LITTLE GUY GO...?

HE ALWAYS COMES TO BE FED.

BUT NOW WITH THE TYPHOON, HE'S NOT HERE.

MIICHAN.

MIIIII-CHAN.

TST TST TST.

I'M SORRY.

WILL YOU HELP ME LOOK FOR HIM?

MII-
CHAN.

MIIII-
CHAN.

Or is
she just
pretend-
ing?

Has
she for-
gotten

what
happened
last
time?

that I paid her rent?

Does she not even know

WHAT COLOR?

WHERE ARE YOU?

COME ON OUT.

WHAT COLOR

IS THE CAT?

ALL WHITE.

RSH

RSH

RSH

MIICHAN.

MIICHAN.

MIIIICHAN.

...HE'S NOT HERE.

LET'S HEAD BACK.

COME ON,

I TOLD YOU, HE'S NOT HERE.

MIICHAN.

I HAVE TO LET HIM IN.

GET HIM INSIDE MY PLACE.

WHERE'D HE GO?

WHERE IS HE?

I HAVE TO SAVE HIM.

I HAVE TO PROTECT HIM.

OR HE'LL DIE.

HE'LL DIE OUTSIDE.

HERE, BOY.

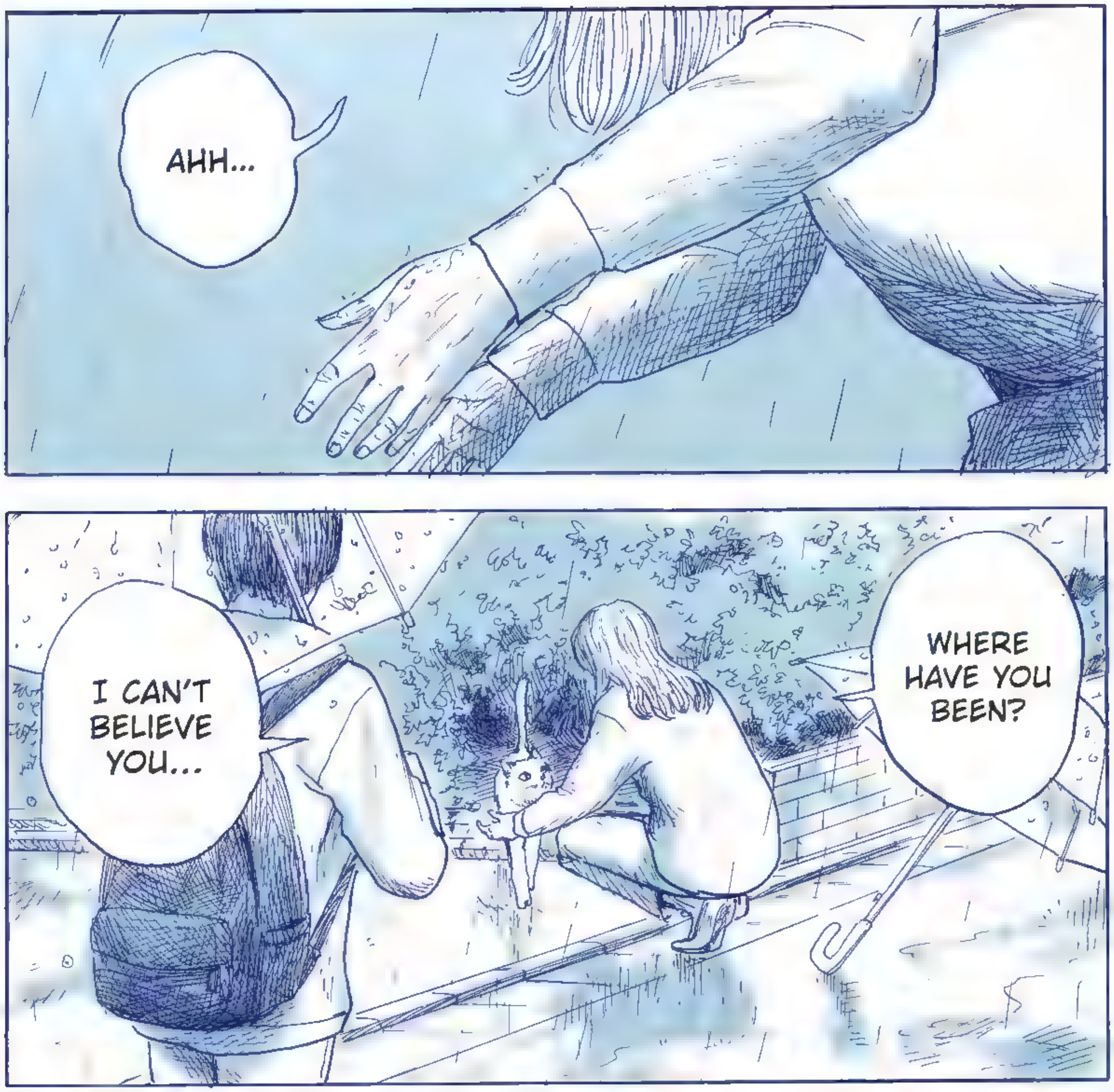
HERE, BOY.

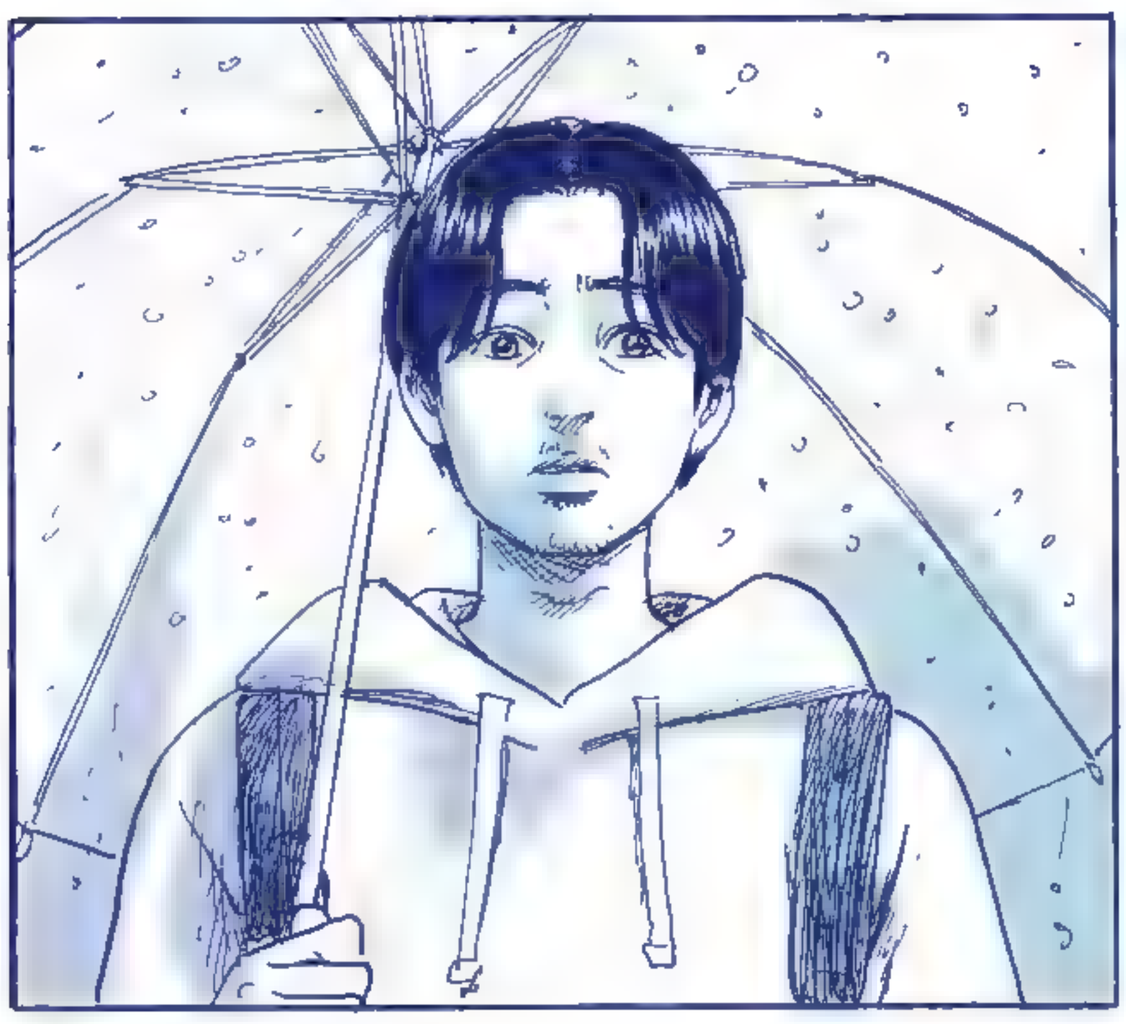
SEI...

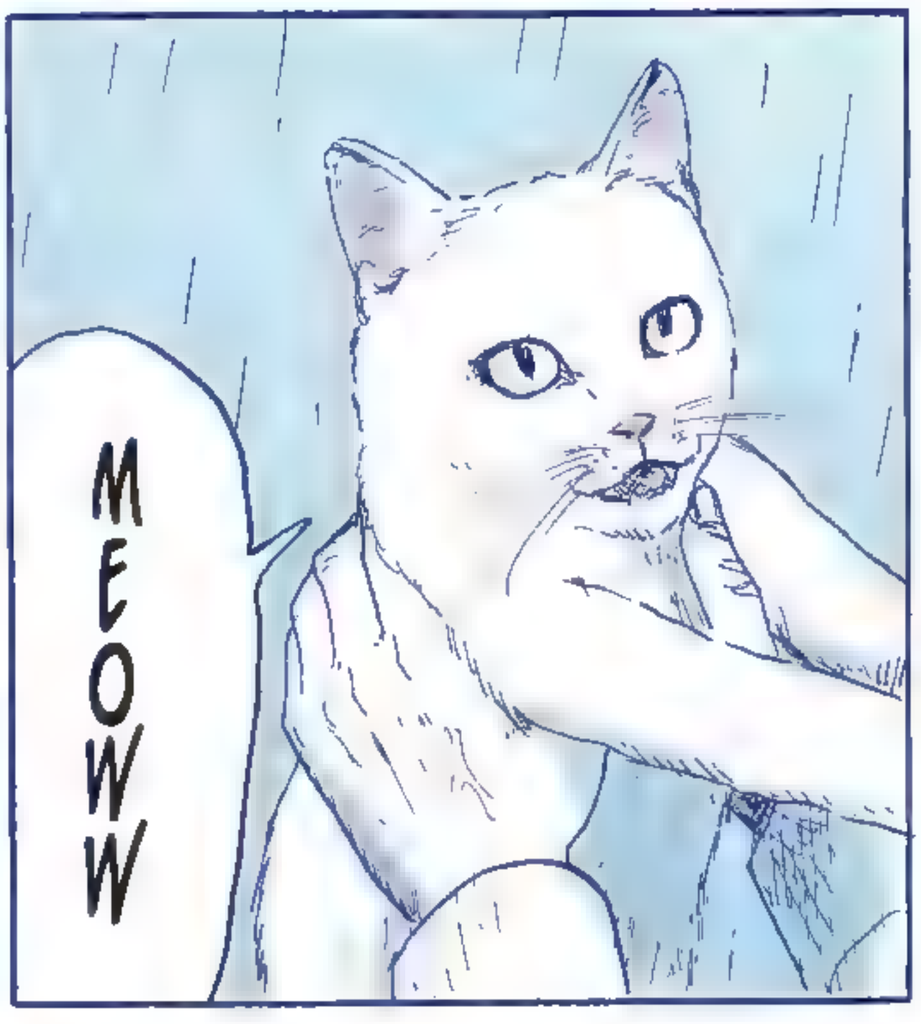
WHERE ARE YOU...

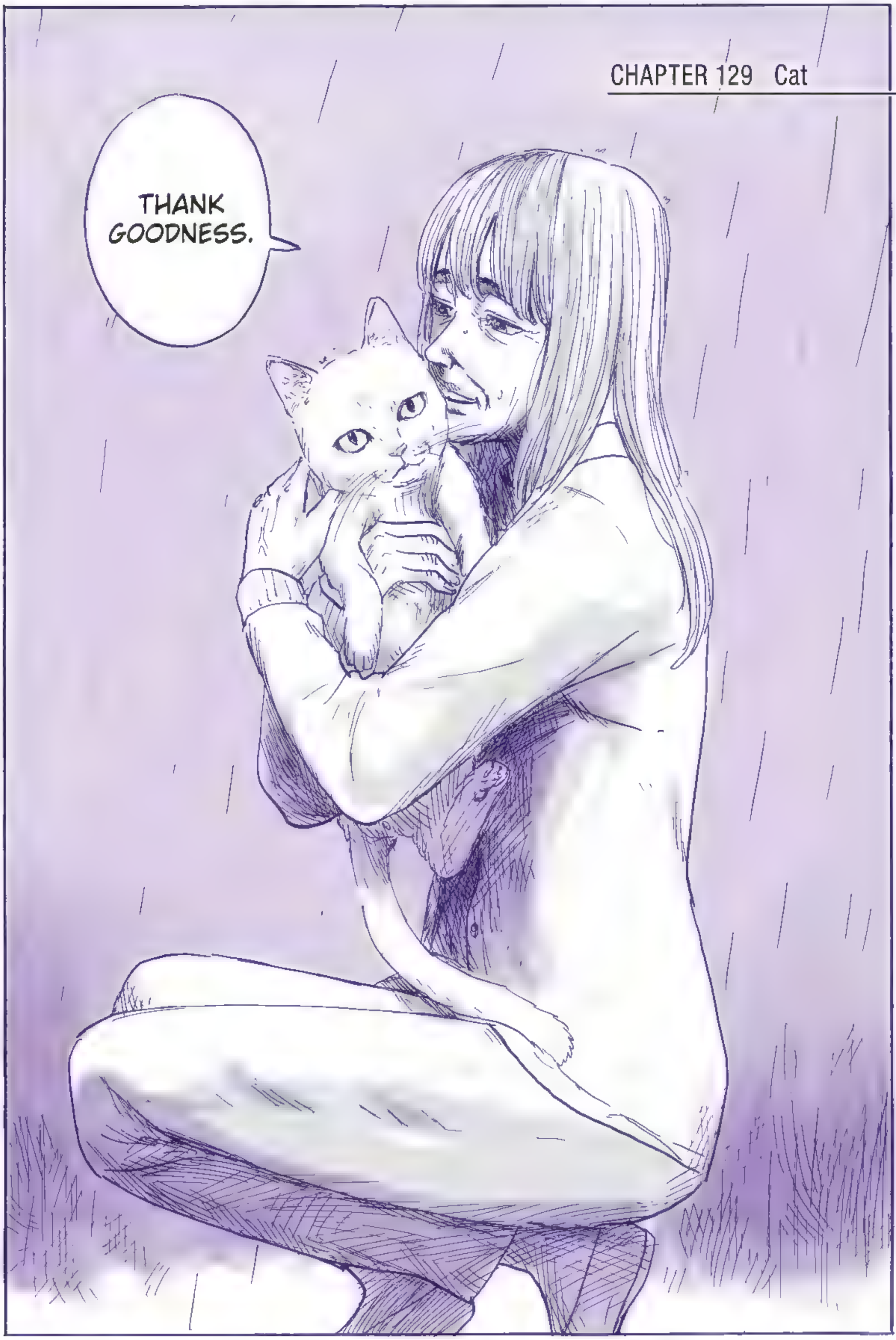
MEOWW

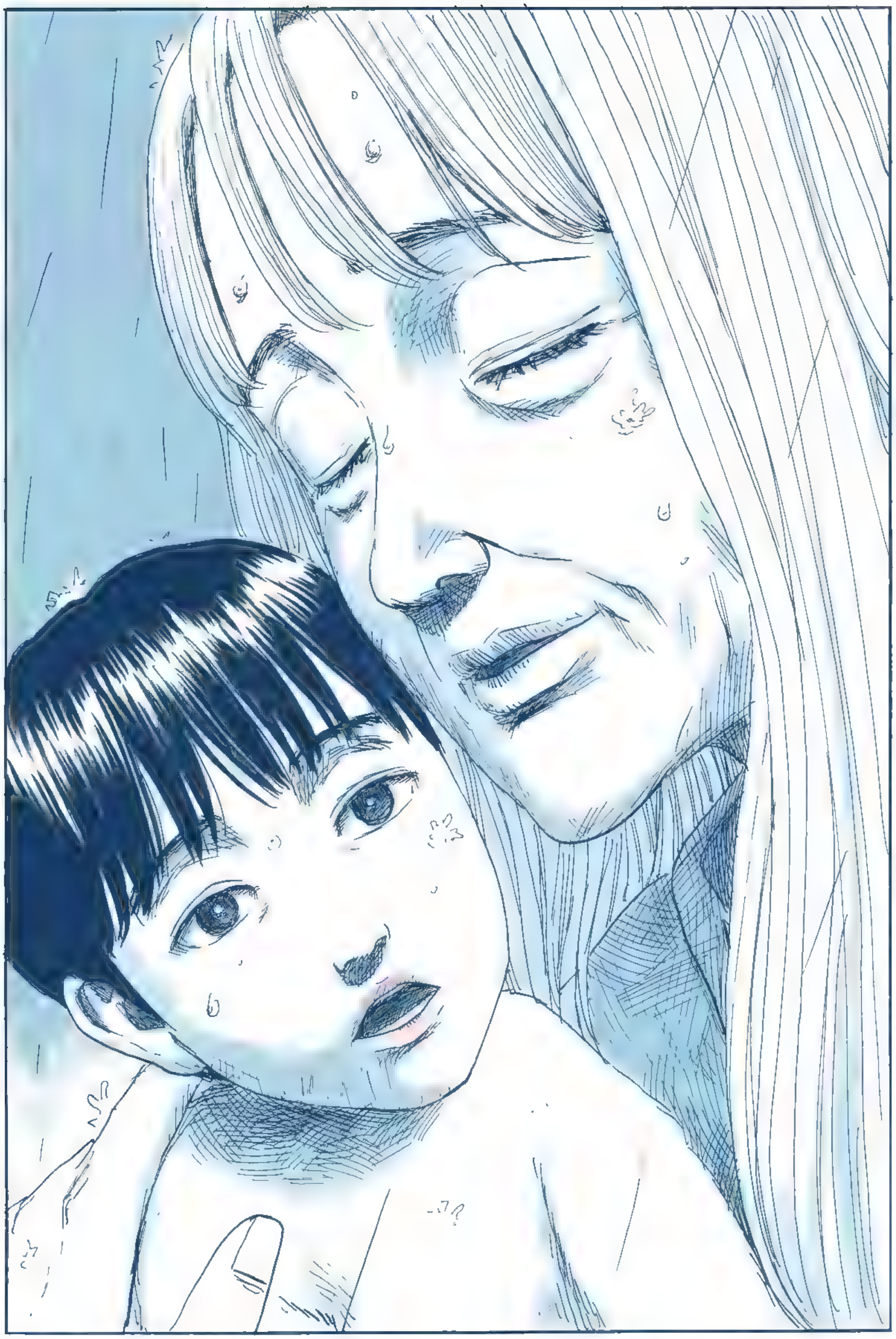
MEOWW


AHH...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU...
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?




MEOW


THANK GOODNESS.



MEOW

OKAY THEN.

LET'S HEAD BACK.

SCARF

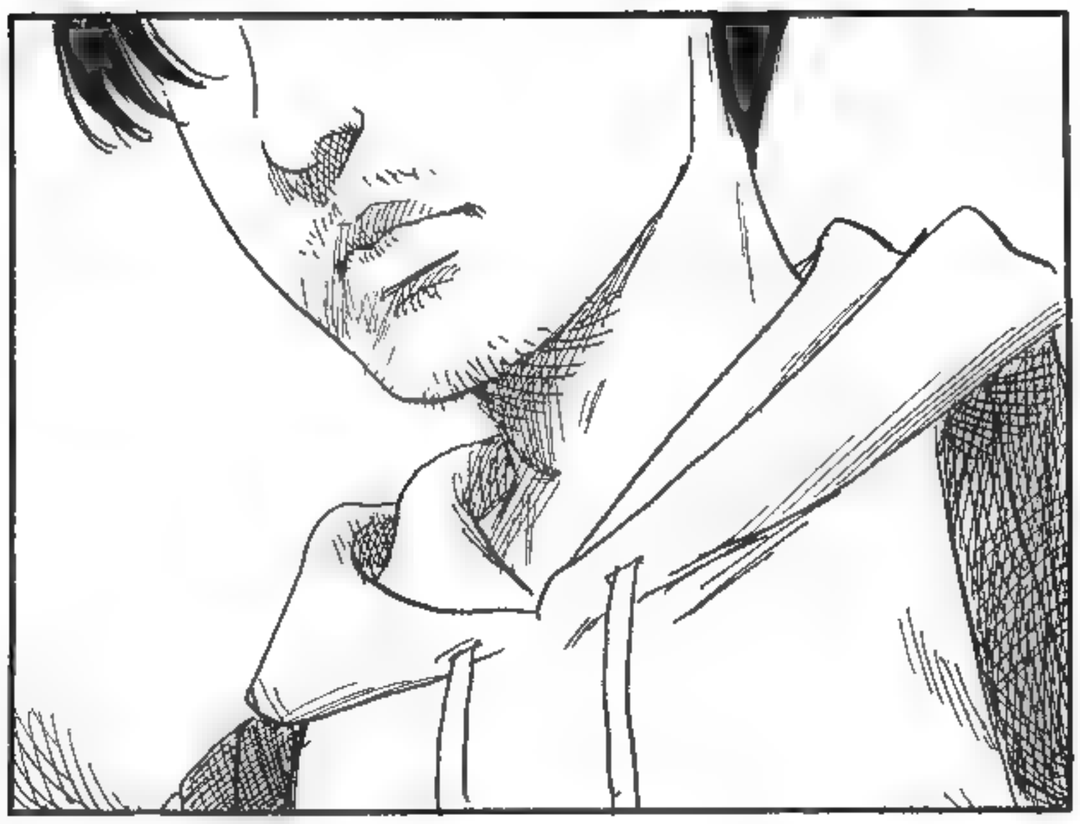
SCARF

THANK YOU...

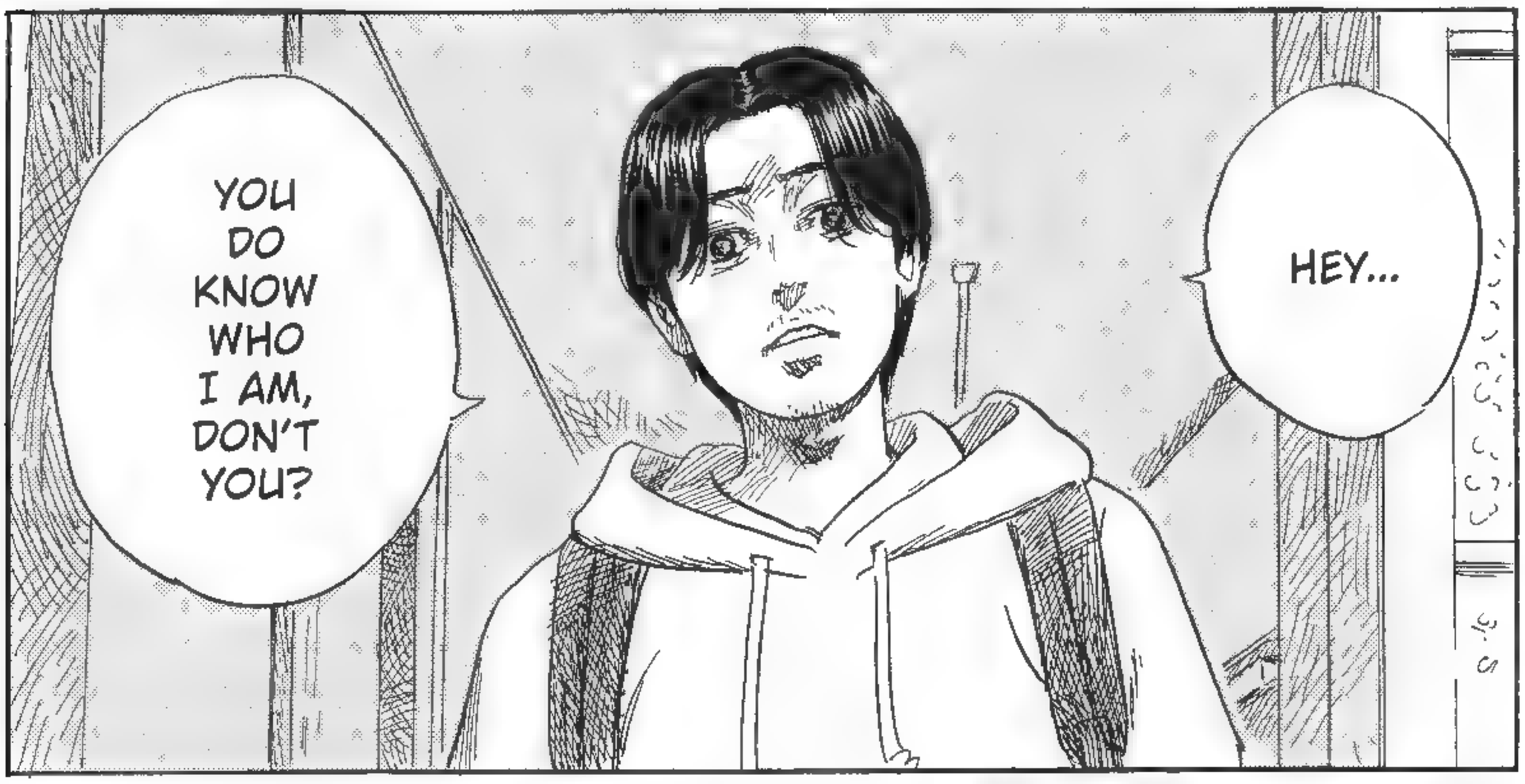
SO MUCH.

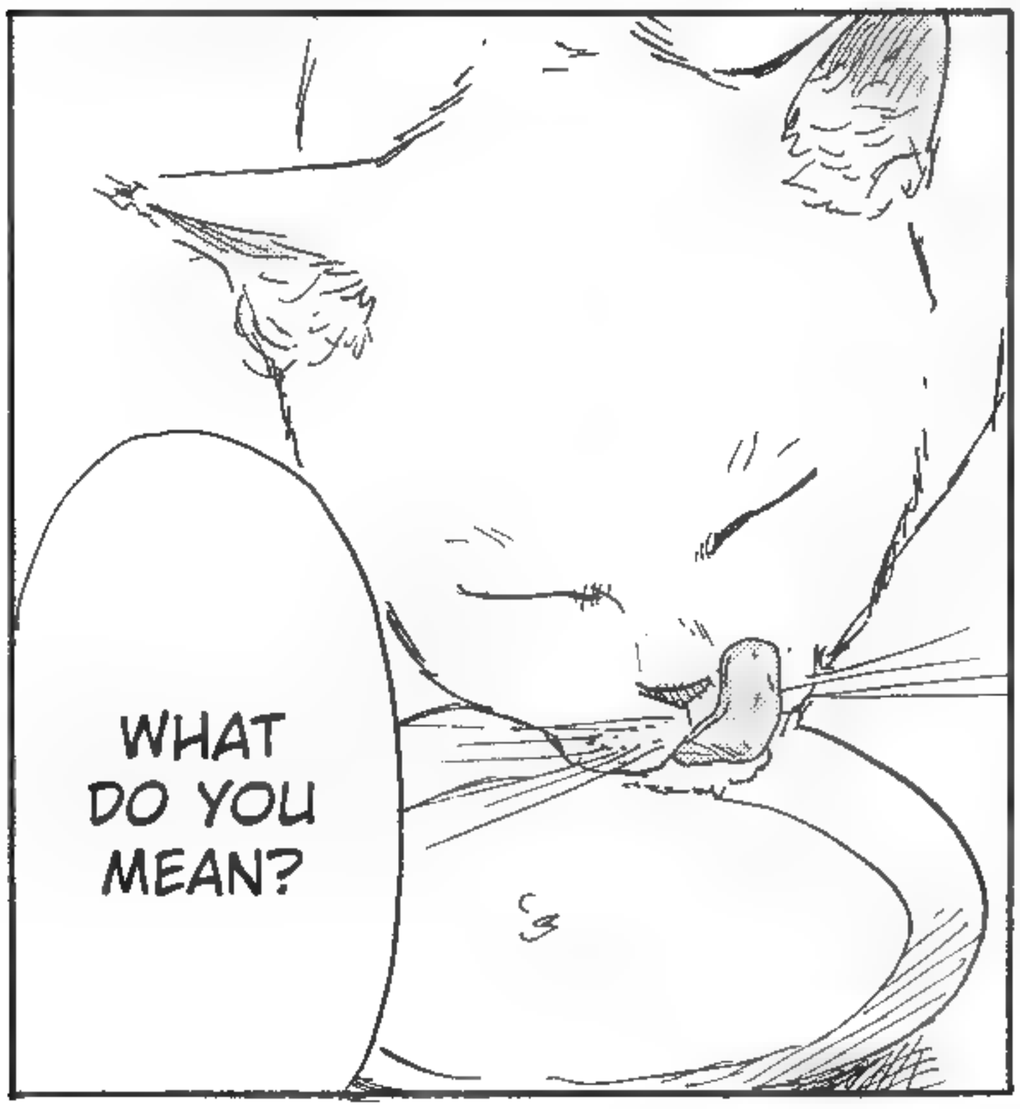
I DON'T KNOW HOW I WOULD HAVE FOUND HIM.

IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU,



FISH
H


YOU DO KNOW WHO I AM, DON'T YOU?
HEY...

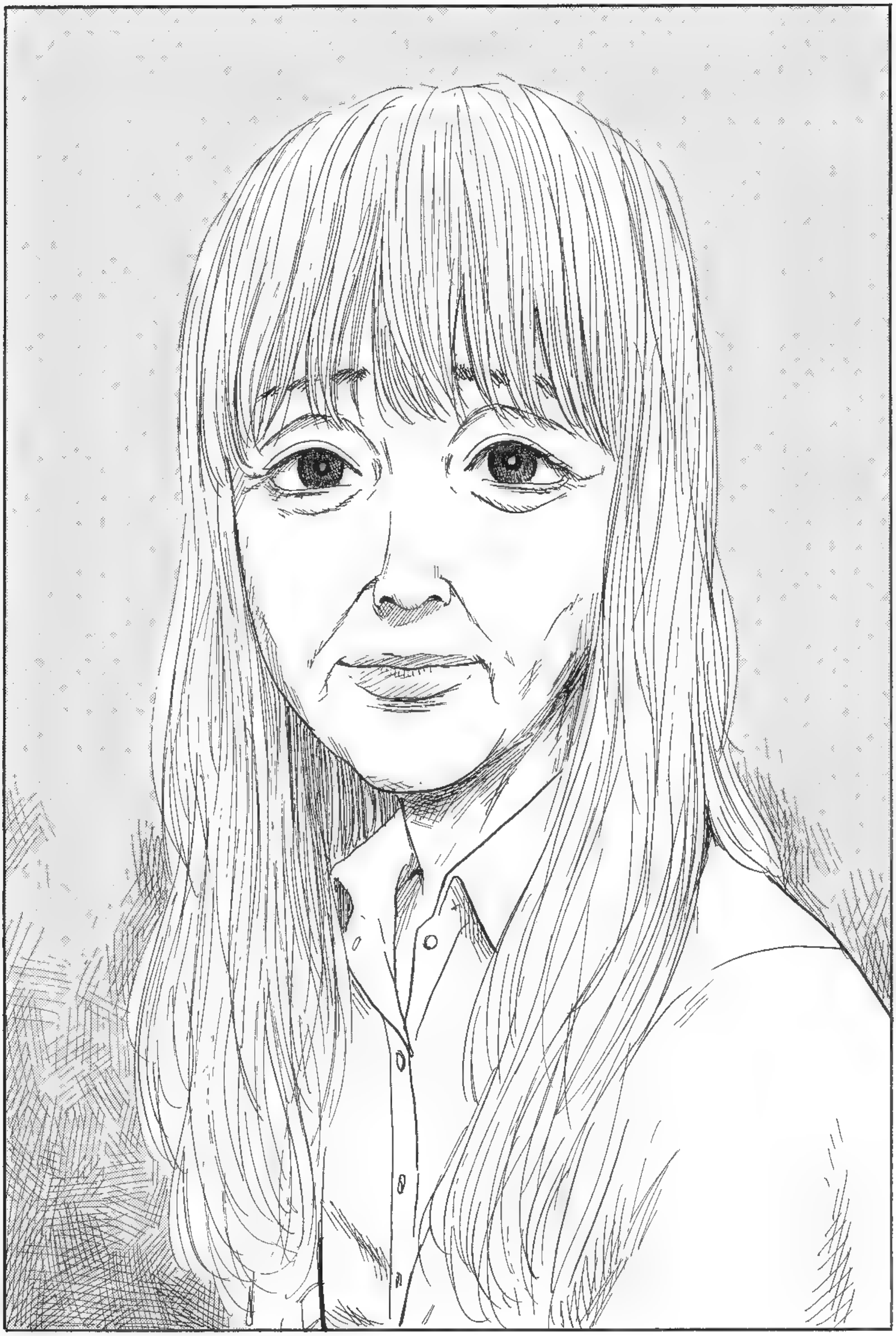

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

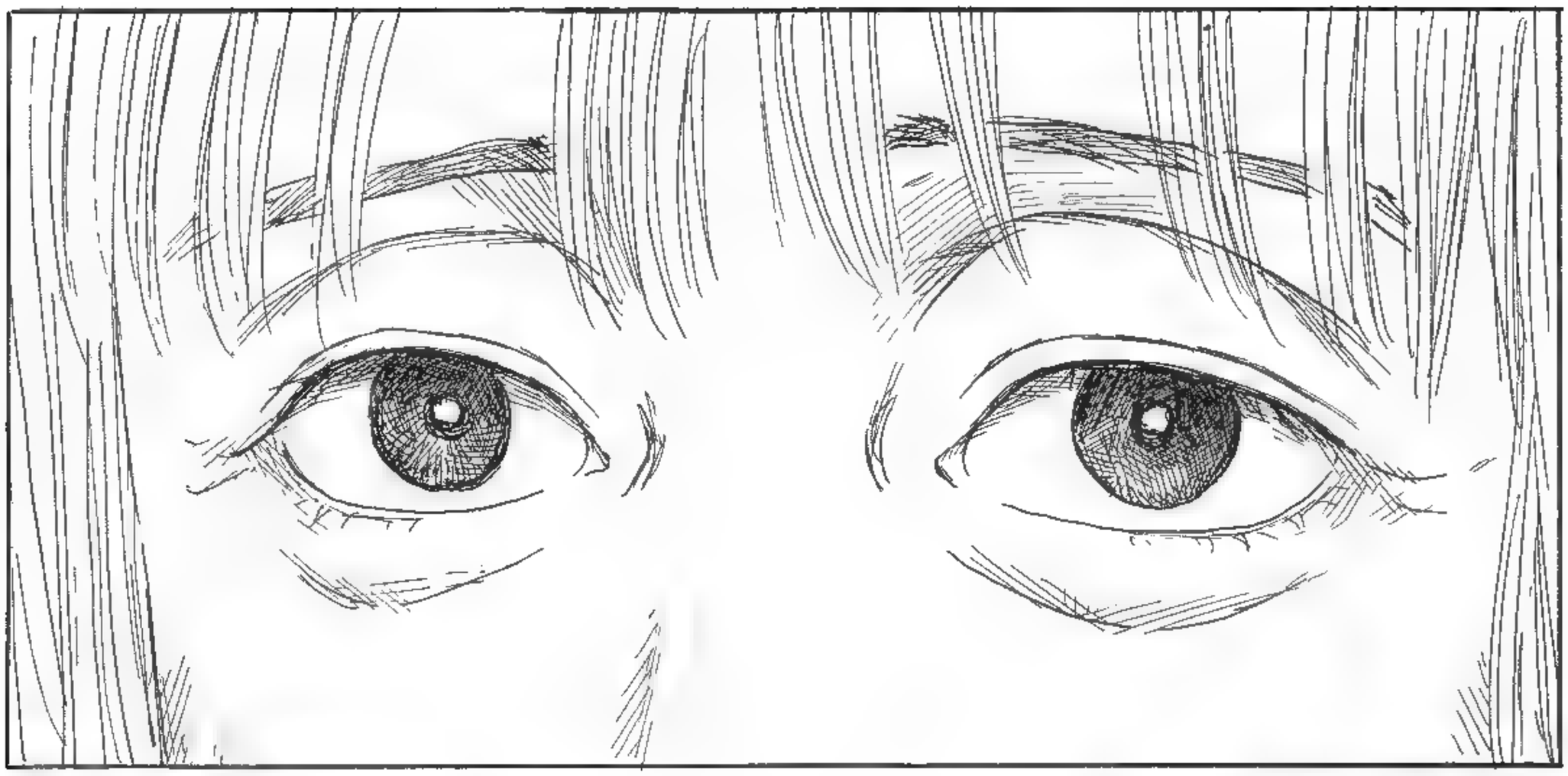
RIGHT?

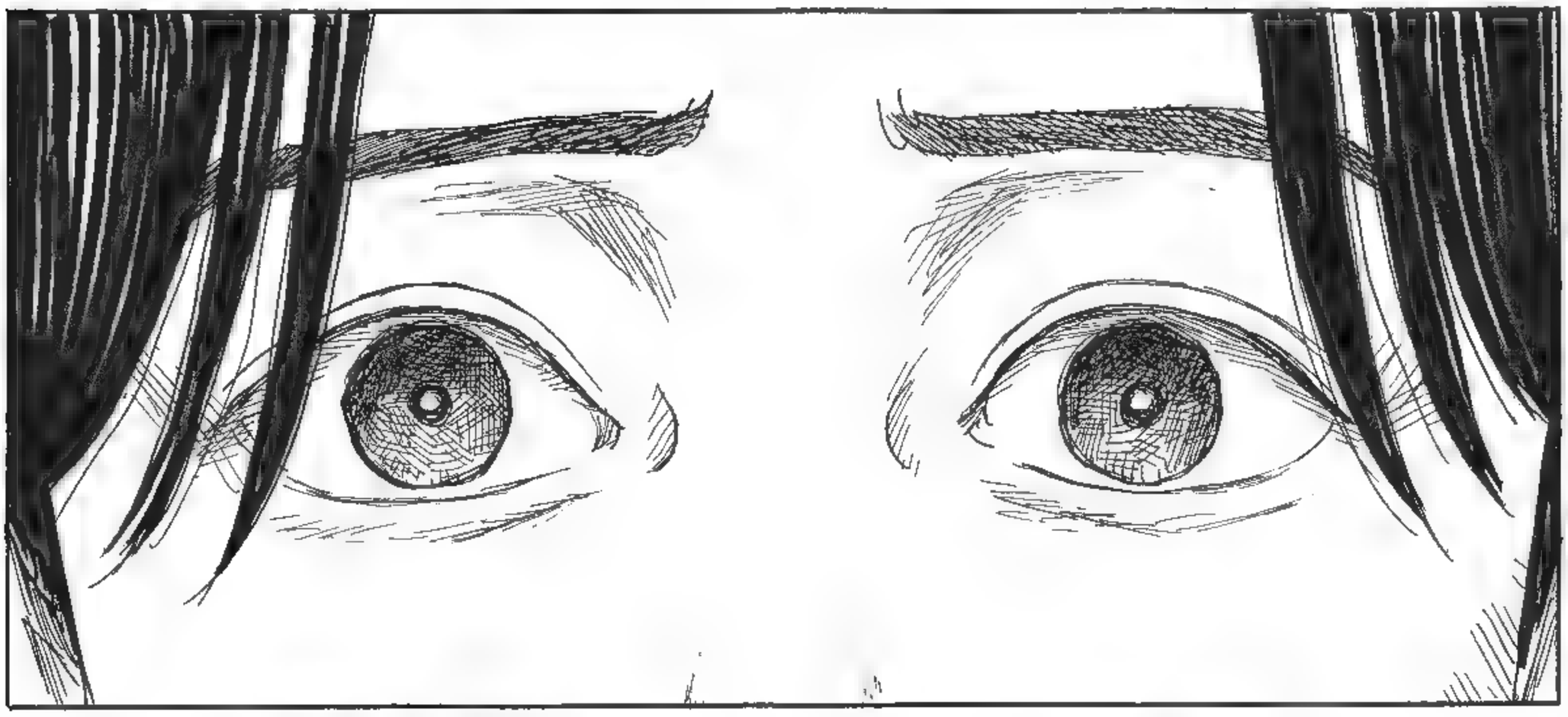
YOU KNOW THAT I'M SEIICHI...

ARE YOU JUST

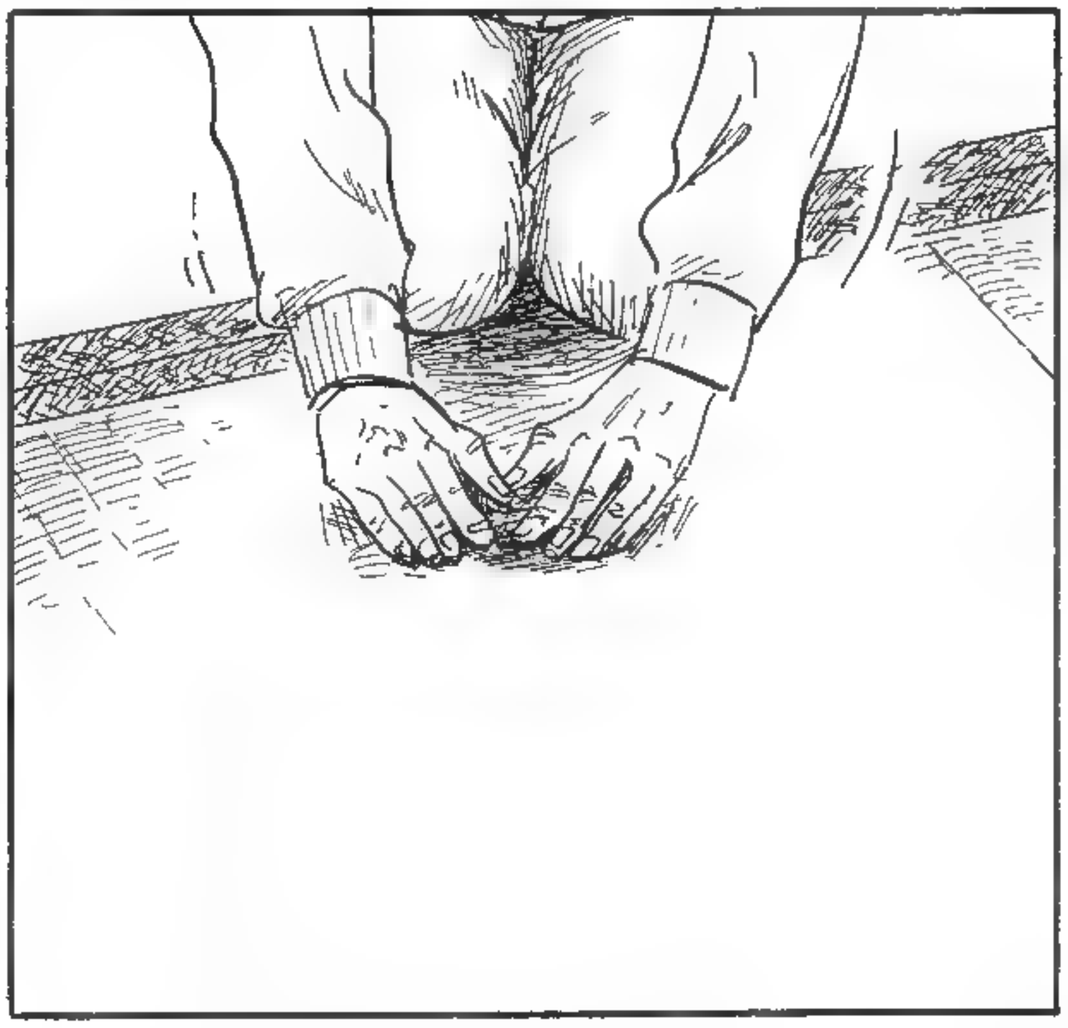
PRETENDING TO BE SENILE?

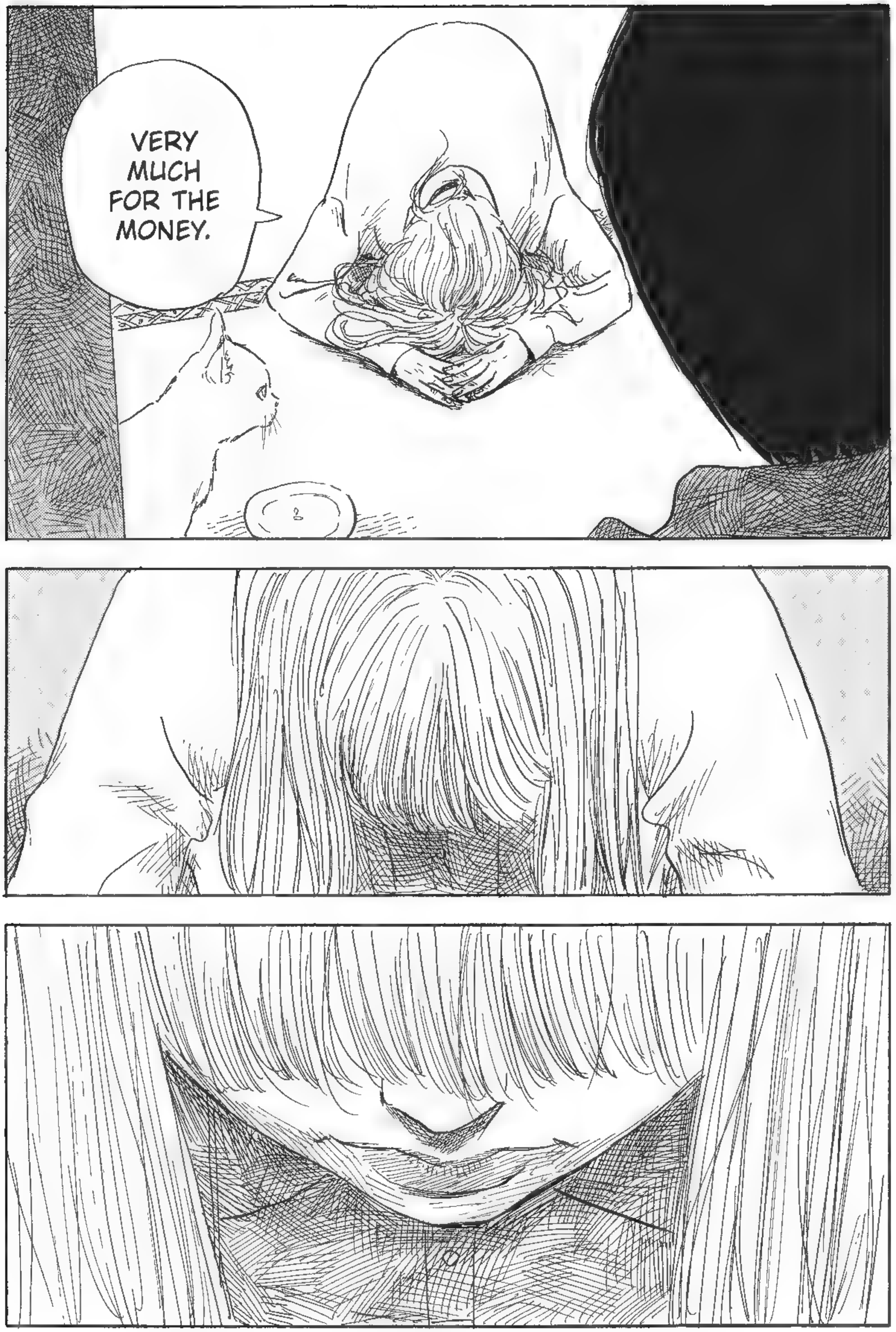






THANK
YOU




VERY MUCH FOR THE MONEY.

PLEASE STAY FOR DINNER.

IF YOU HAVE TIME...

HUH?

HERE, YOU CAN LISTEN TO THE RADIO.

CHIK

I WON'T BE LONG.

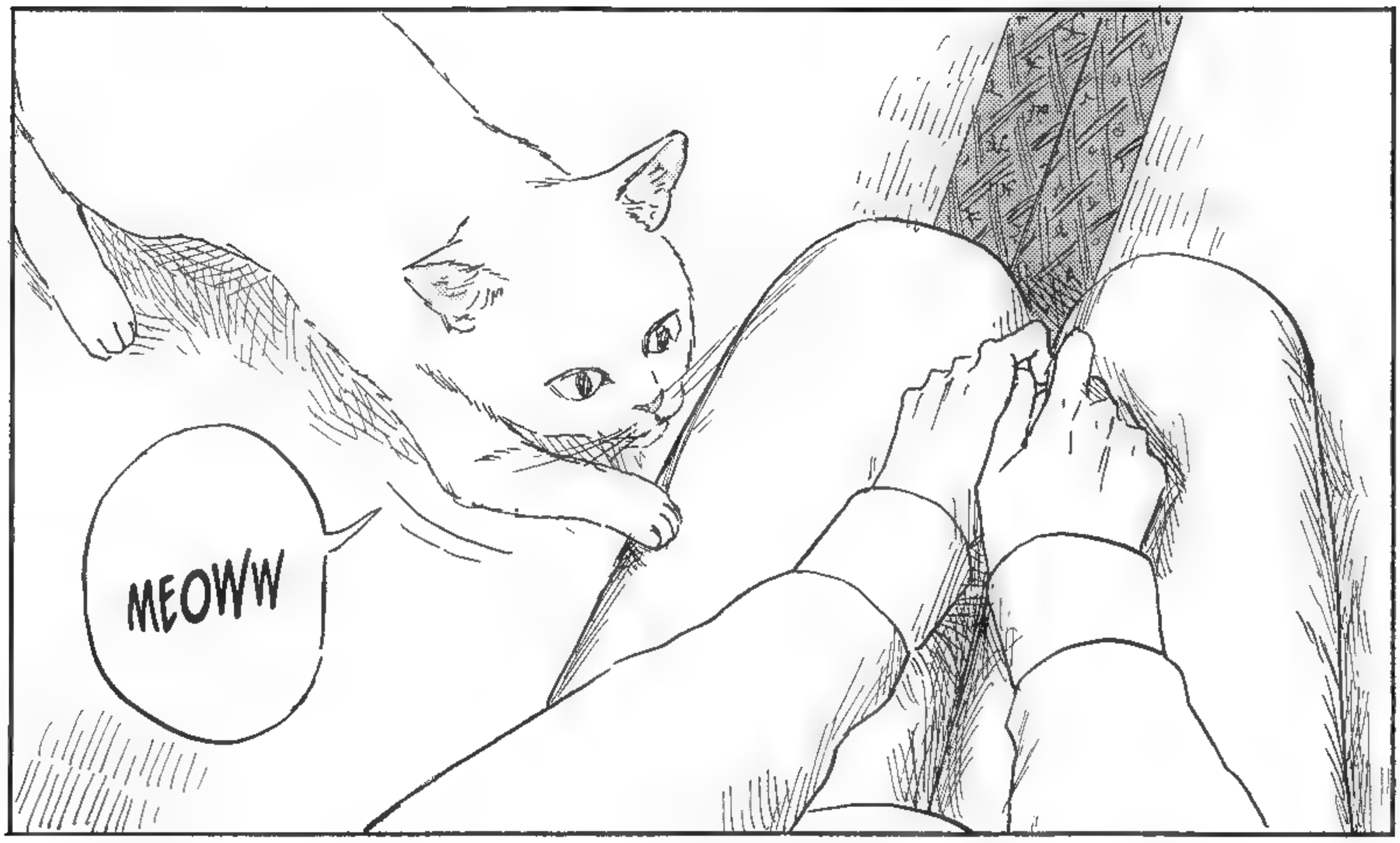
SIT DOWN.

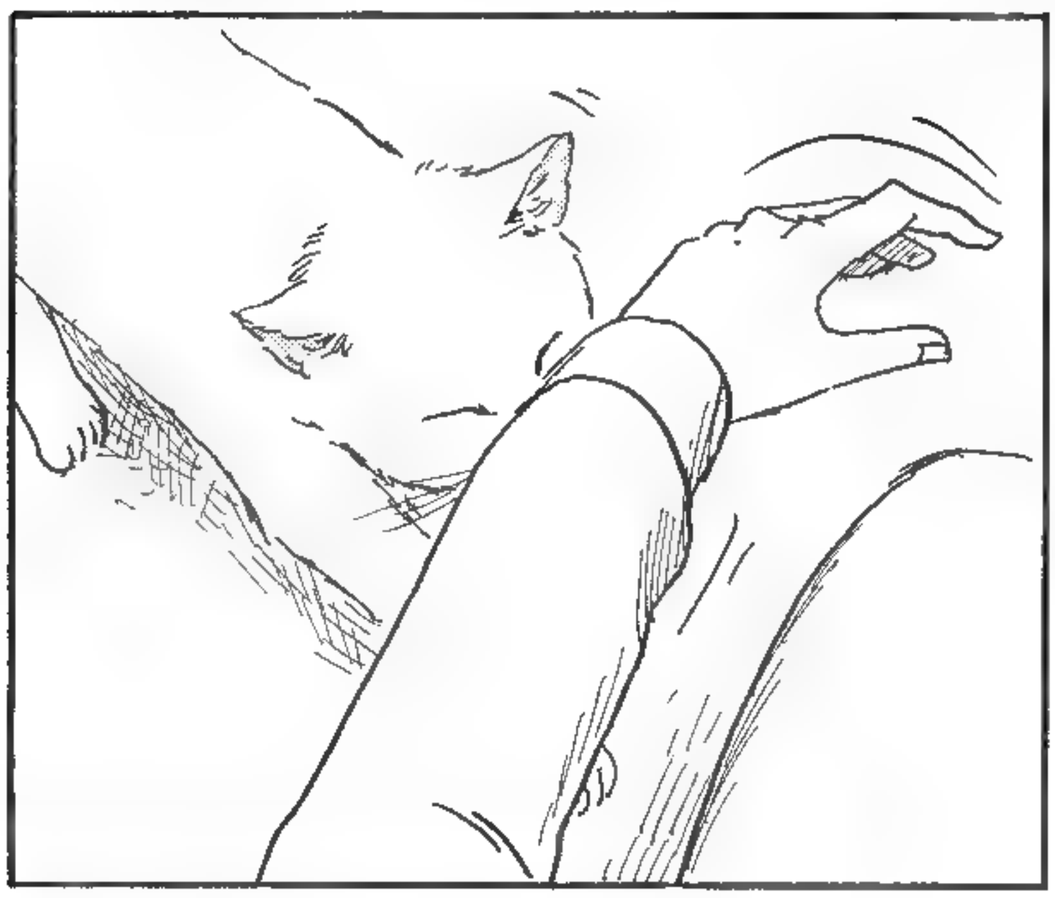
TUP

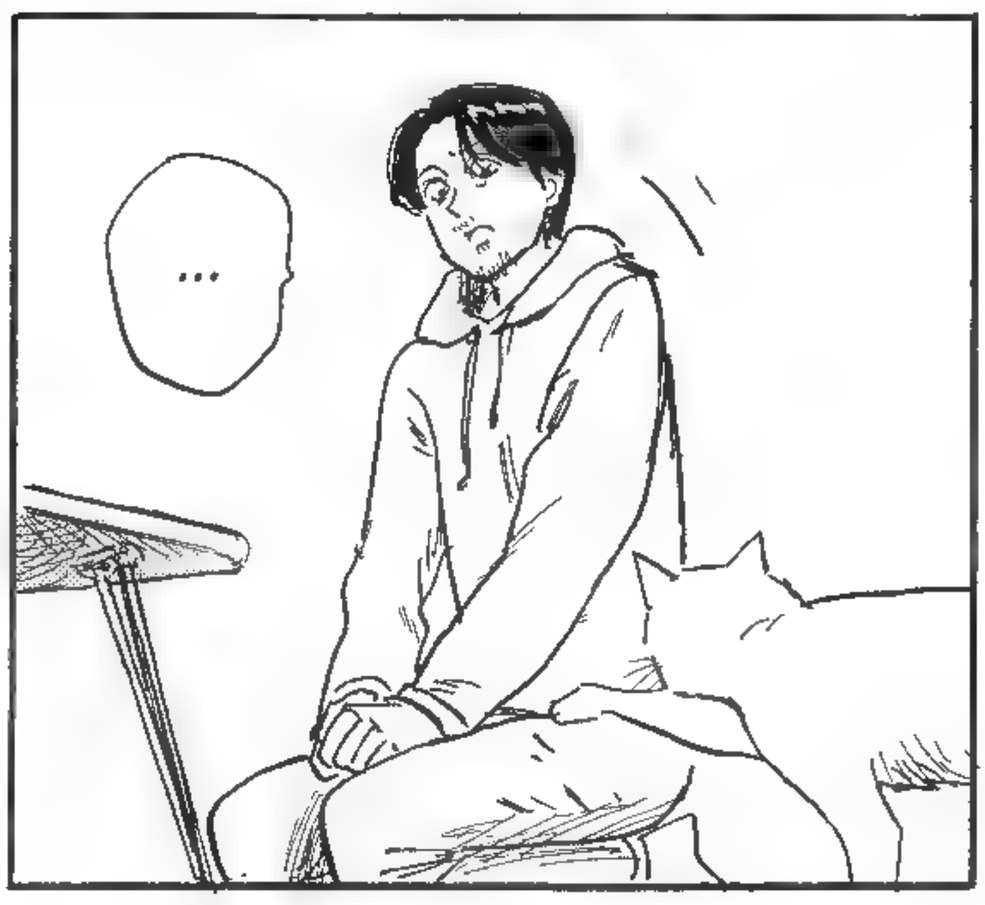
T-UP

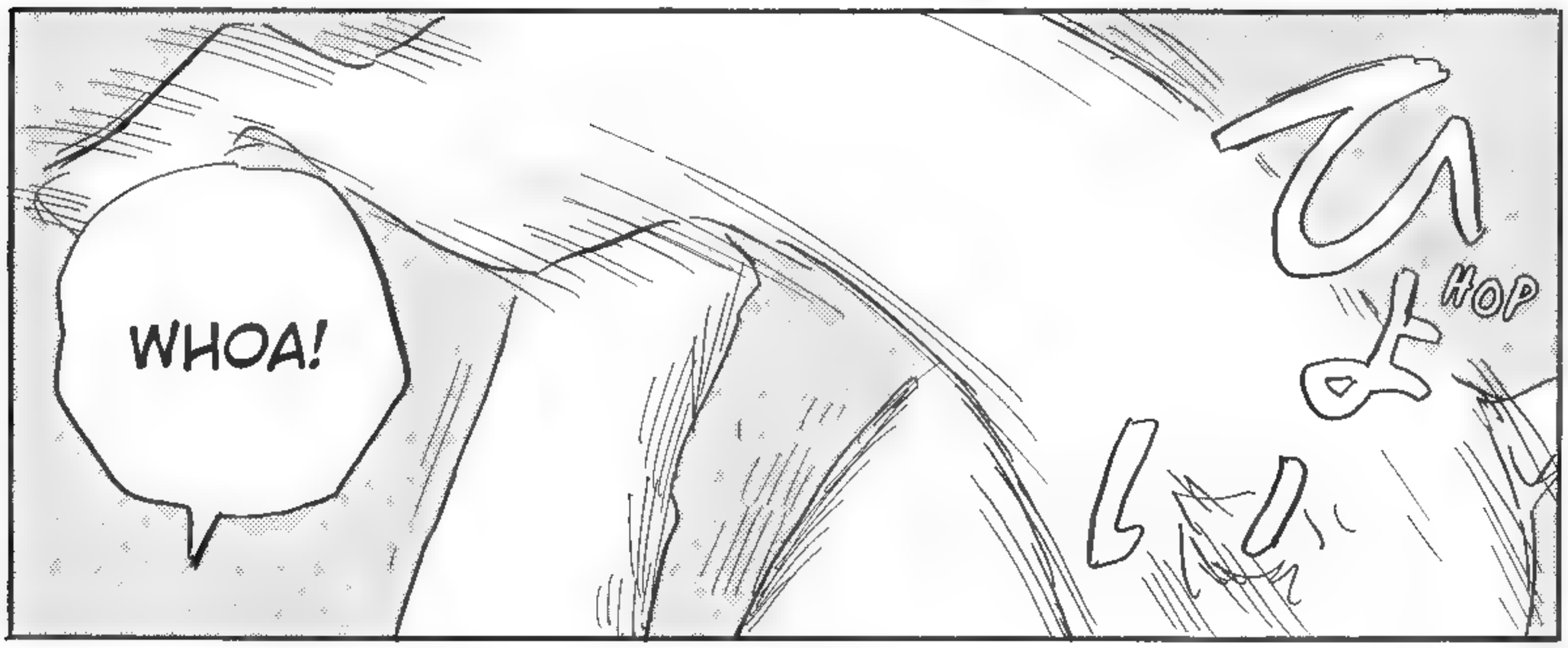
TYPHOON 21 IS EXPECTED TO HIT SHIZUOKA PREFECTURE LATE TONIGHT...

OWING TO THE DEVELOPED RAIN CLOUDS AND THE FRONT LINGERING NEAR HONSHU...


MEOWW

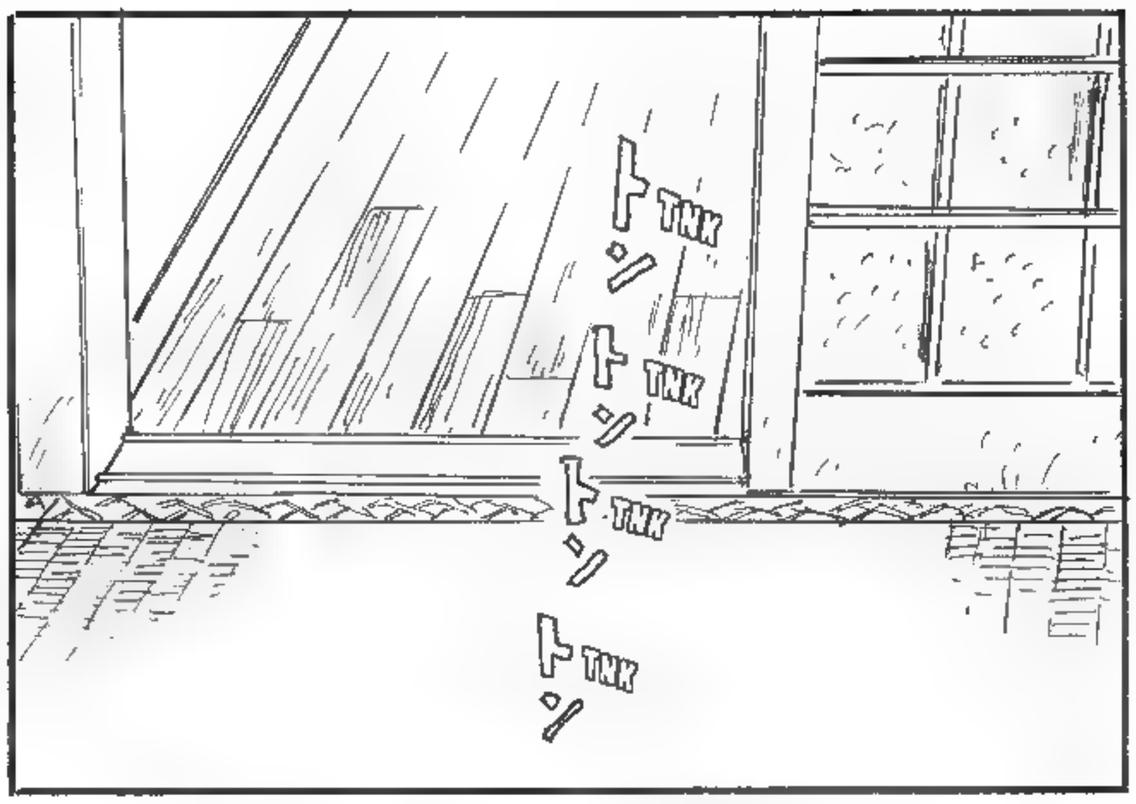



...

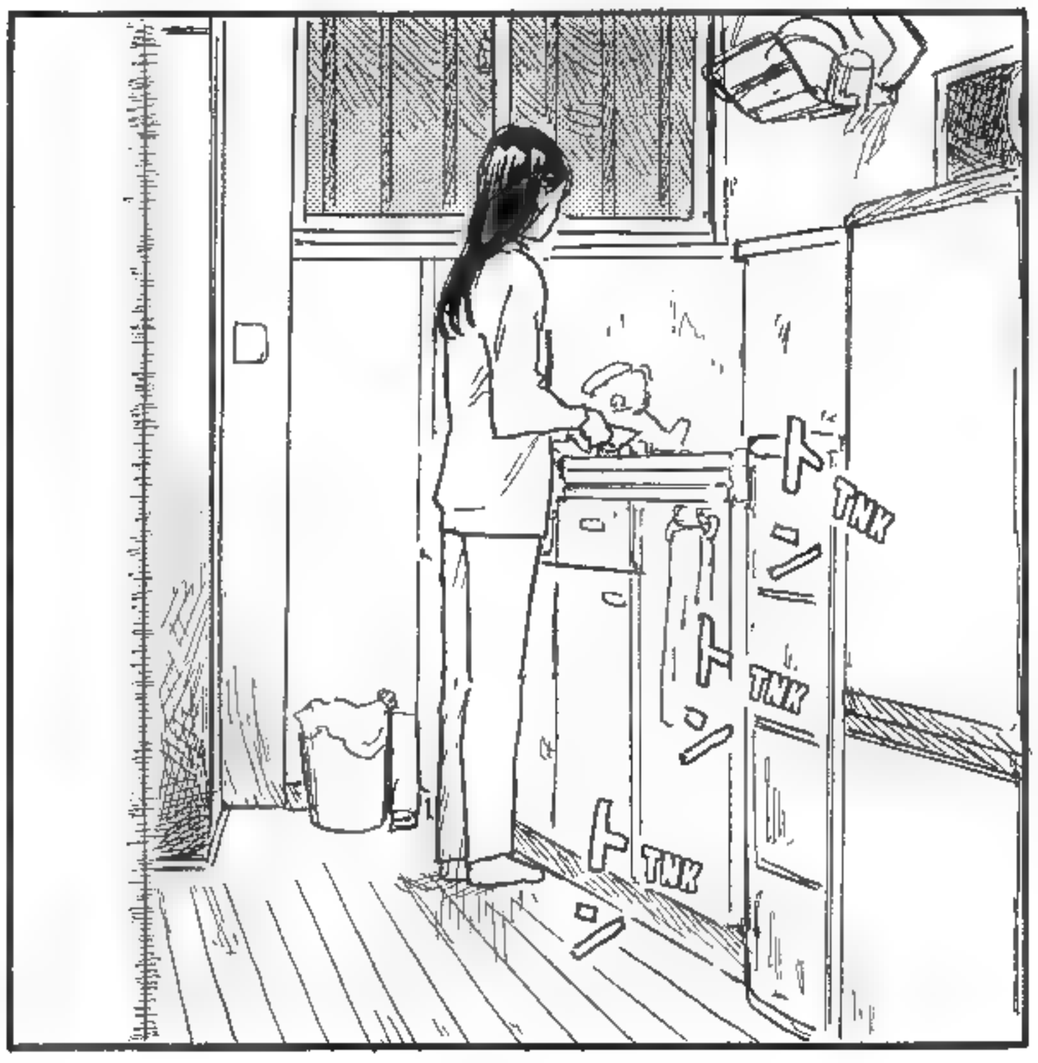

WHOA!
HOP

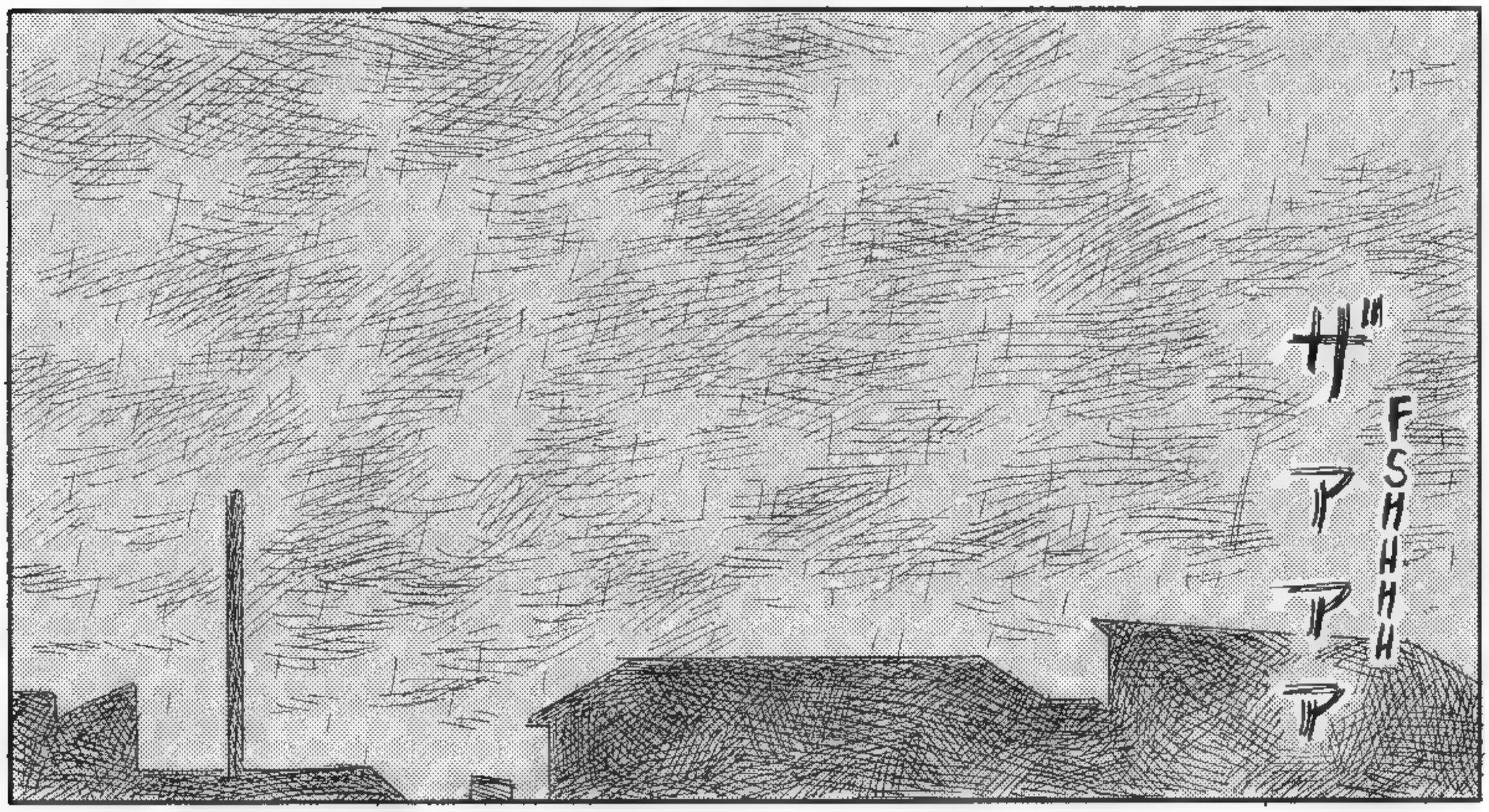
MRRROW

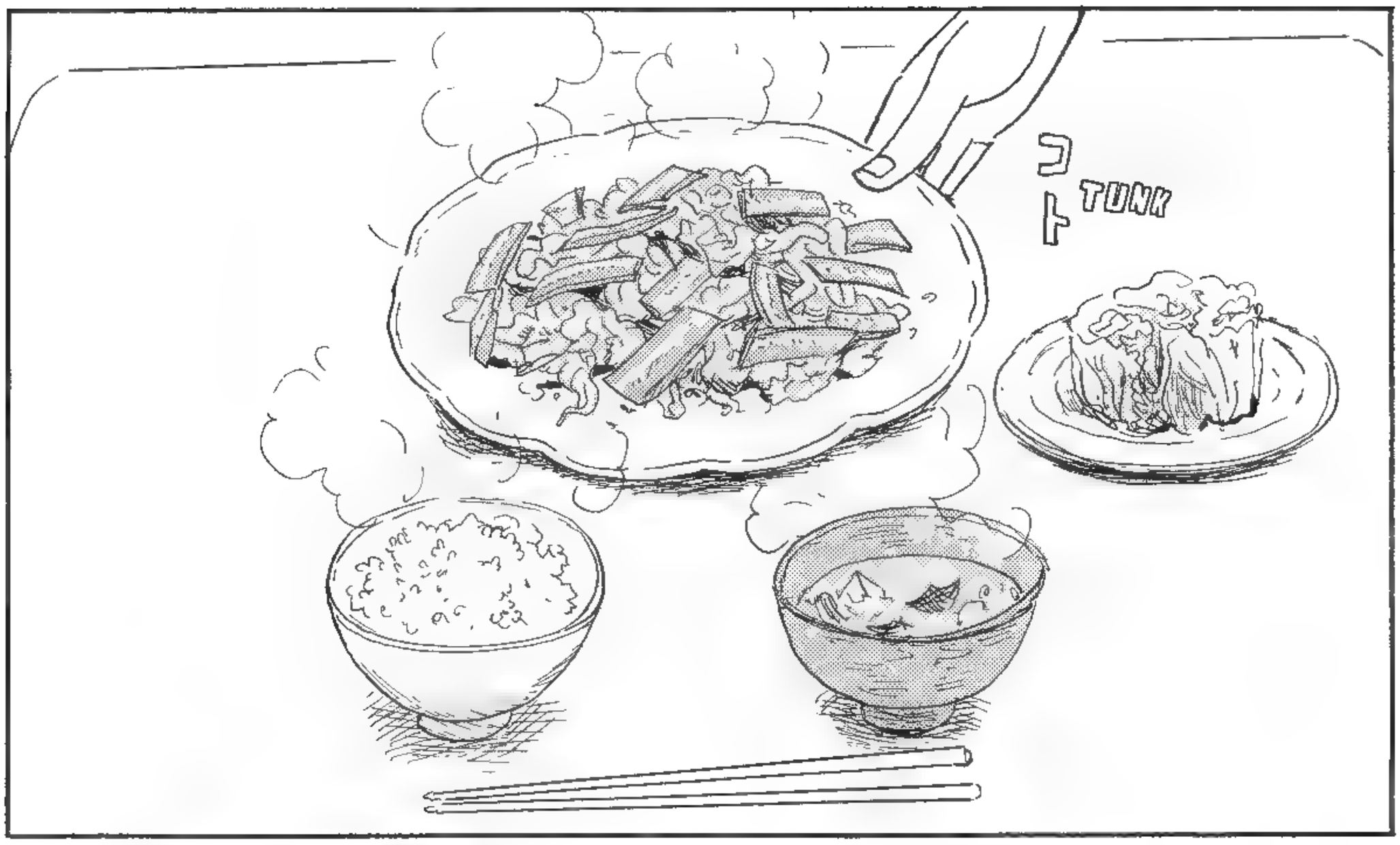
MRROW


トTNK
トTNK
トTNK
トTNK

トTNK
トTNK
トTNK

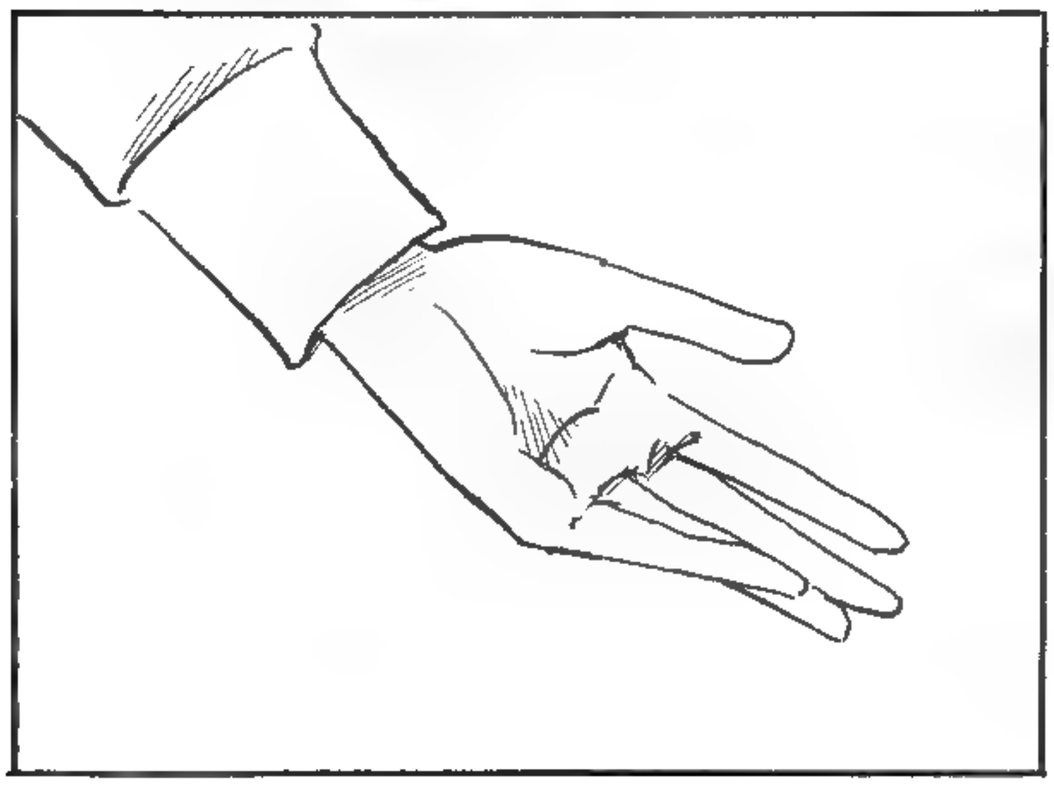

トTNK
トTNK
トTNK


ナ"
FSHHHH
ナ
ナ
ナ


コトTUNK

OH MY.
HE'S REALLY TAKEN TO YOU.

HMP.



PURR

PURR

PURR

HELP YOURSELF.

OH, PLEASE, GO AHEAD!

...DO YOU...

...BOOZE?

HAVE ANY BOOZE?

DO YOU...

ANY-THING'S FINE.

I MIGHT HAVE SAKE...

A LITTLE, ANYWAY.

HOLD ON A SEC.

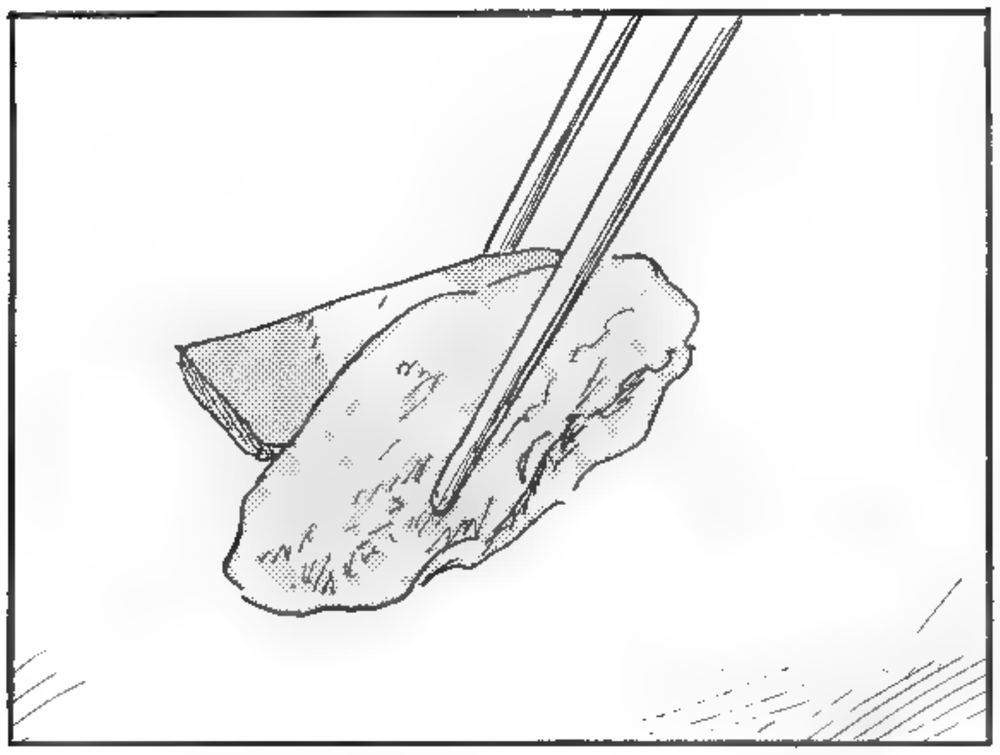
GLUK
GLUK

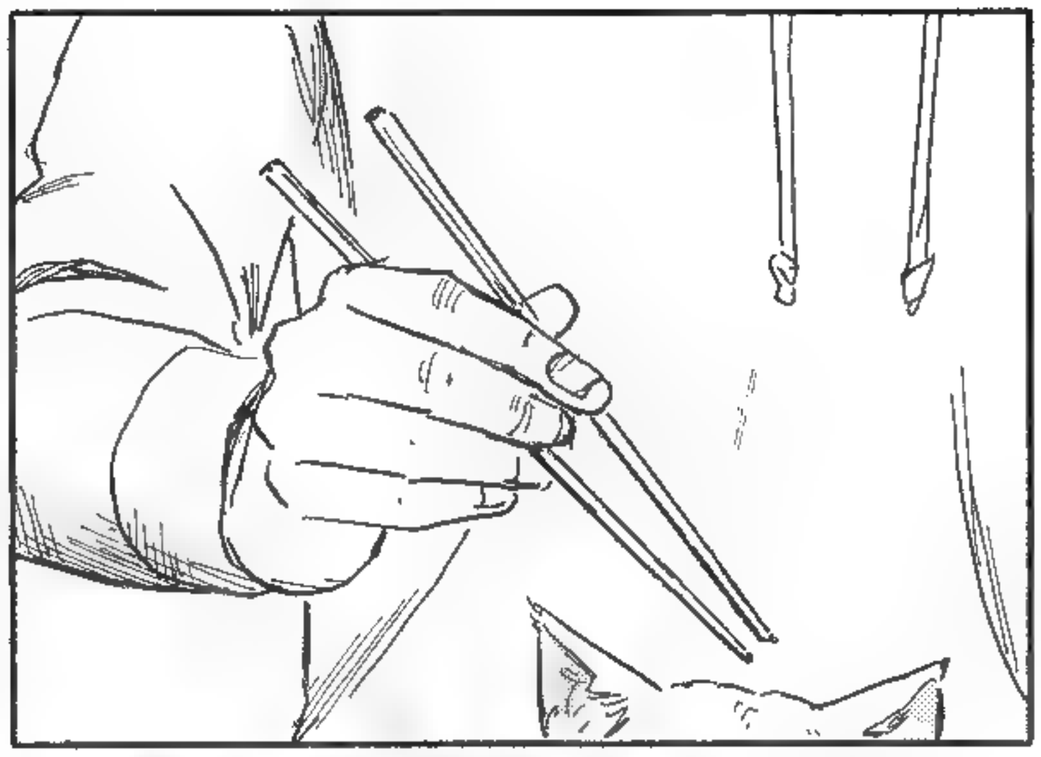
TUP
TUP
FOUND IT!

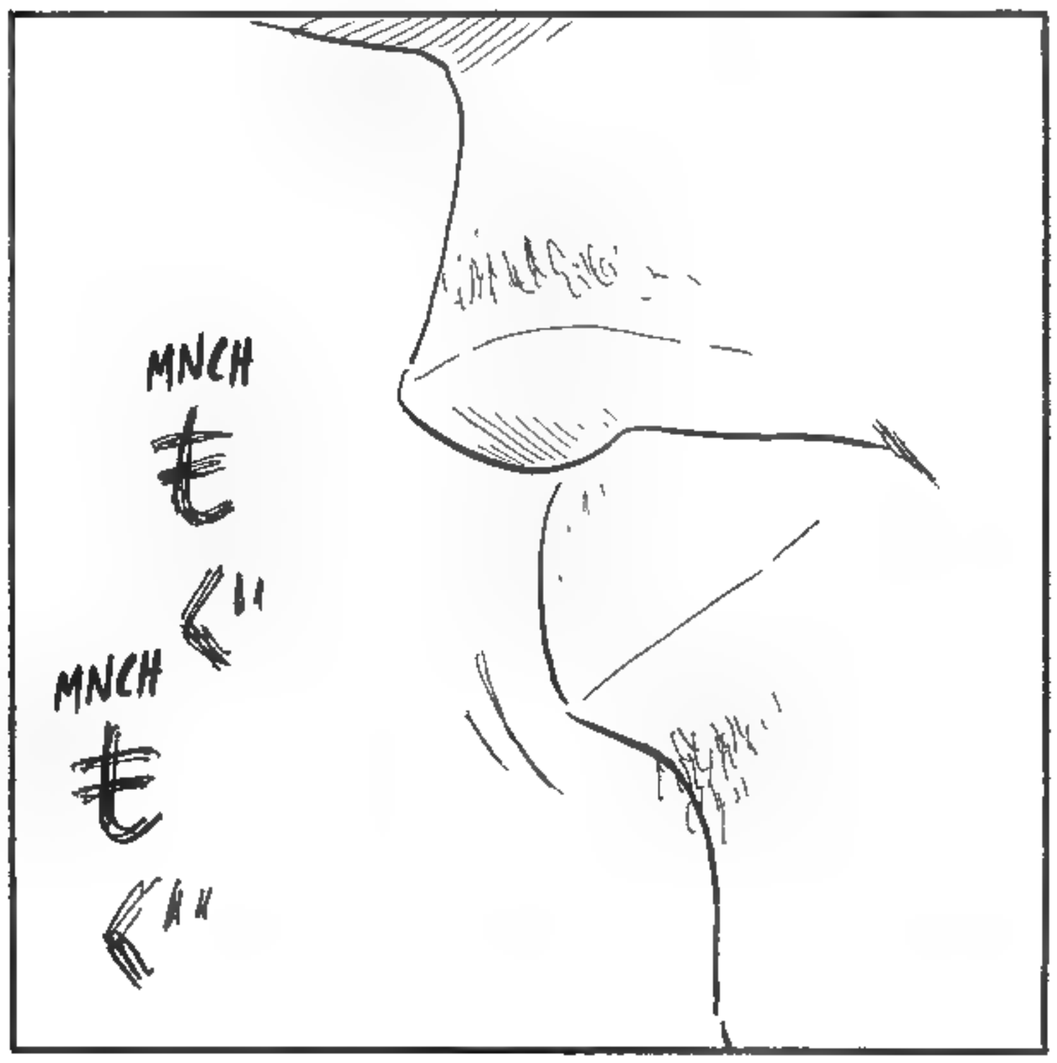
SWIG

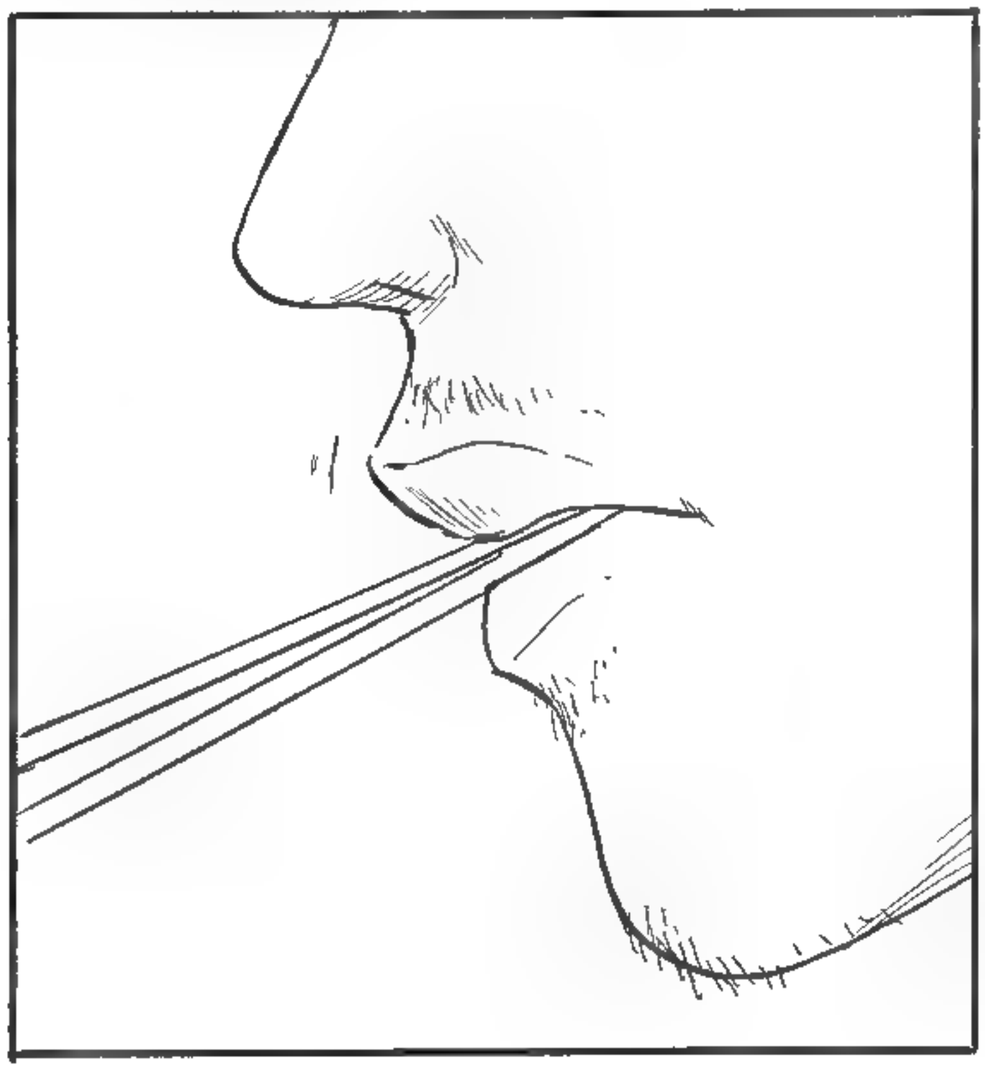
HFFF...

GULP
GULP






MNCH
MNCH



GULP

IS IT GOOD?

HAVE SOME, TOO.

I'LL

PURR

PURR

PURR

FSHHHHHH

ヒュー

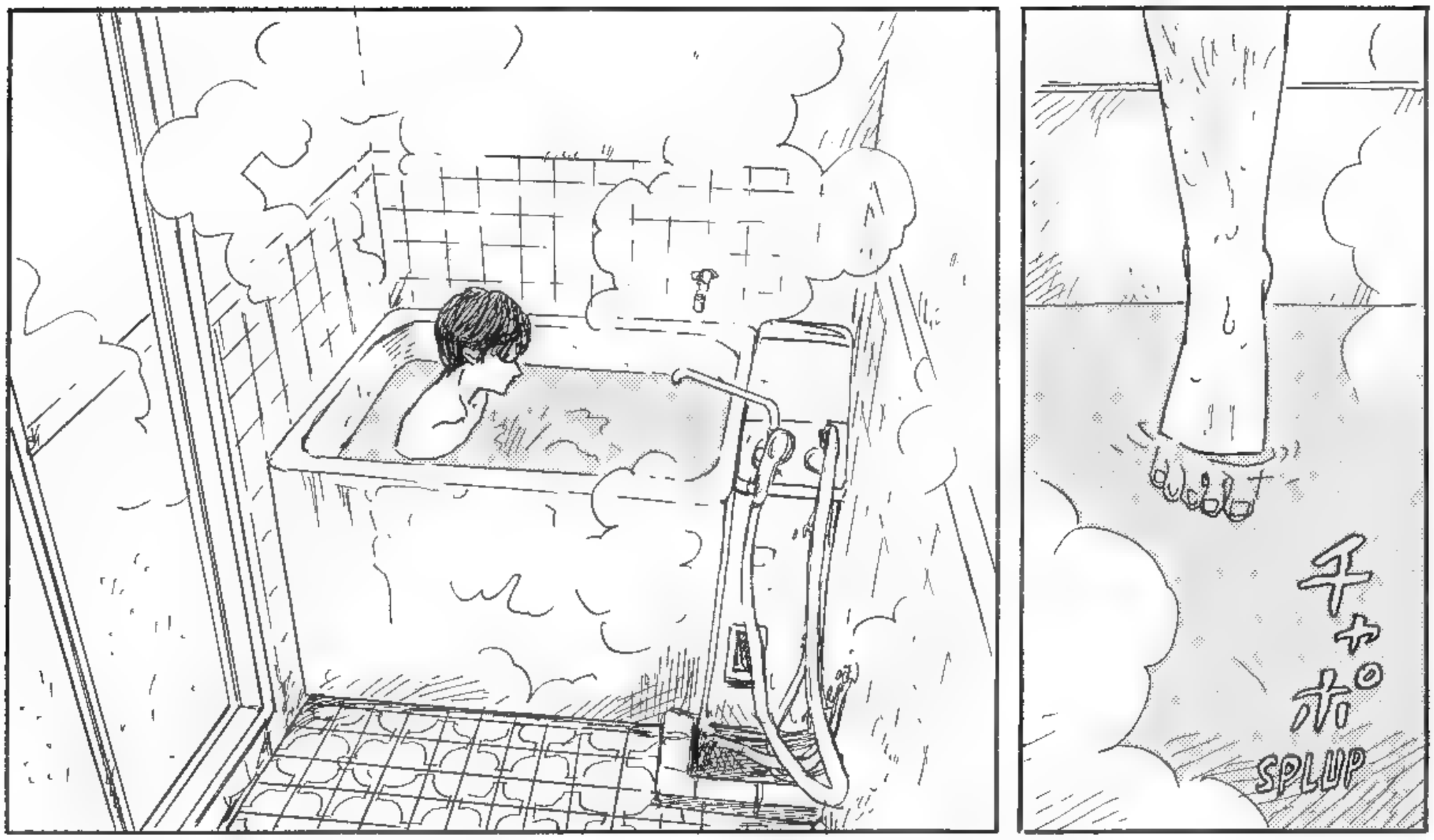
FWOOO

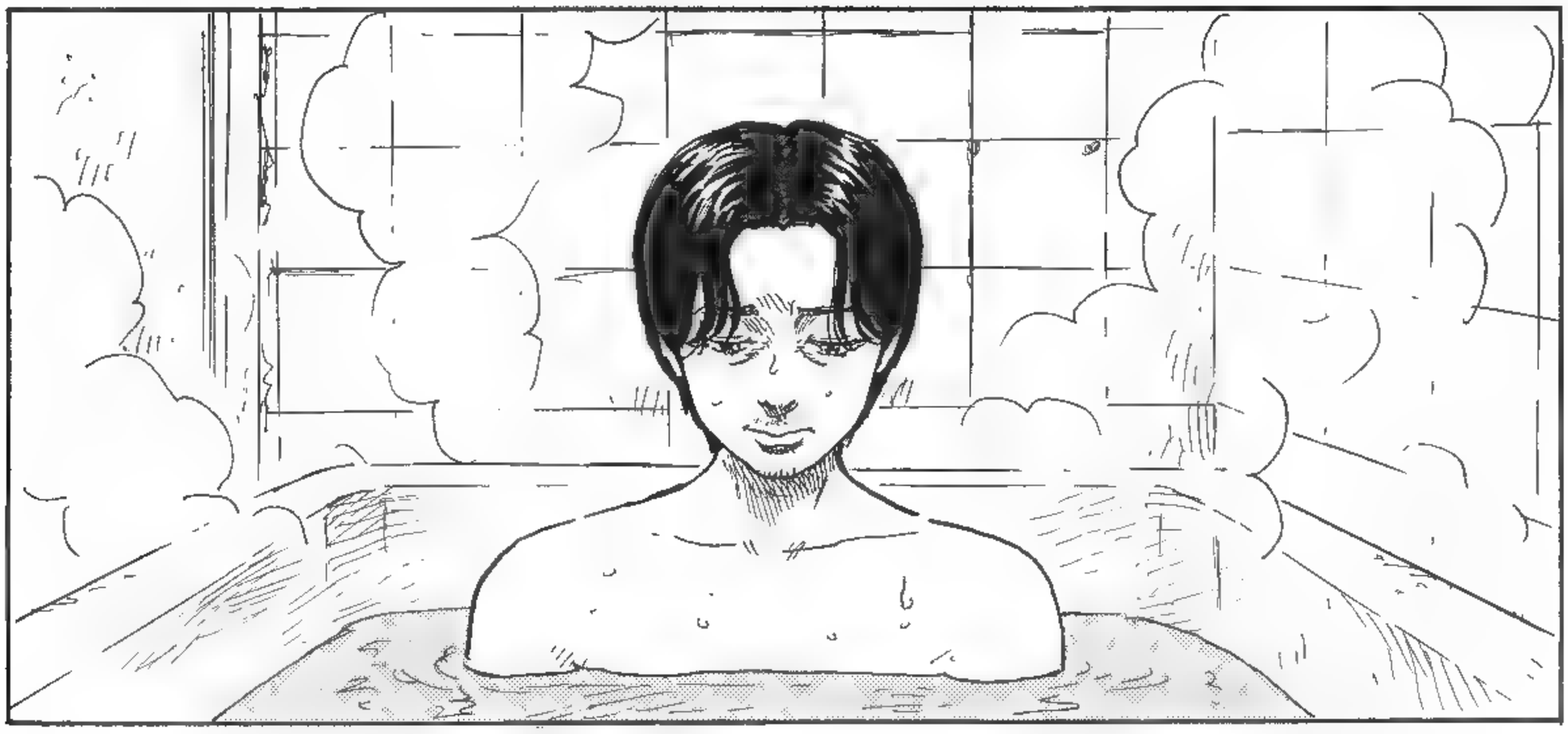
...HUH?

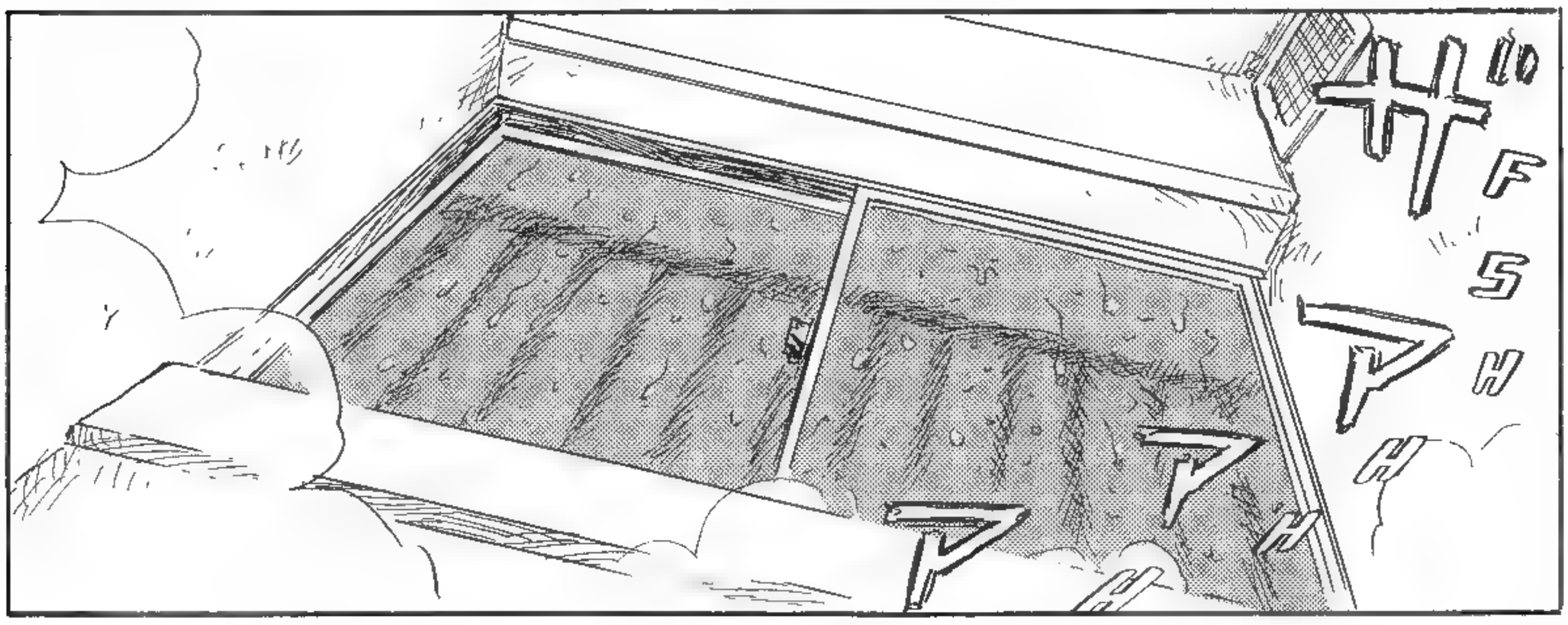
WHY DON'T YOU STAY HERE TONIGHT ?

IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO GO HOME IN ALL THIS.

I'LL FILL THE BATH.






ザアアア

doing here?

What am I

She was so close,

all this time.

How far is my place from here?

Three miles? Maybe five?

I ONLY HAVE ONE FUTON.

YOU TAKE IT.

I'LL JUST SLEEP ON THE FLOOR.

OH!

I SAID IT'S FINE.

BUT...

...IT'S FINE.

I'LL TAKE THE FLOOR. JUST GIVE ME A BLANKET.

ナデナデ

ナデナデナデナデ

GULP ゴクッ

AAH...

LISTEN TO THAT.

WHAT'VE YOU BEEN DOING?

HEY.

HM?

WHAT'VE YOU BEEN THINKING?

HOW,

HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING?

WHY,

ALL ON MY OWN.

AND I WORKED,

...I WENT OUT

AT A FACTORY...

AS A CLEANING LADY,

AT A SUPER-MARKET,

LOTS OF JOBS.

THERE I WAS...

THEN ONE DAY DURING WORK,

I WAS WORKING AT A MATSUNOYA.

UP UNTIL RECENTLY.

ON THE CUSTOMERS' SIDE OF THE COUNTER.

SITTING

AND *THAT* ME WAS THINKING,

"THERE I AM, WORKING."

WENT OUTSIDE.

I

SO EVEN THOUGH I WAS WORKING,

MATSUNOYA

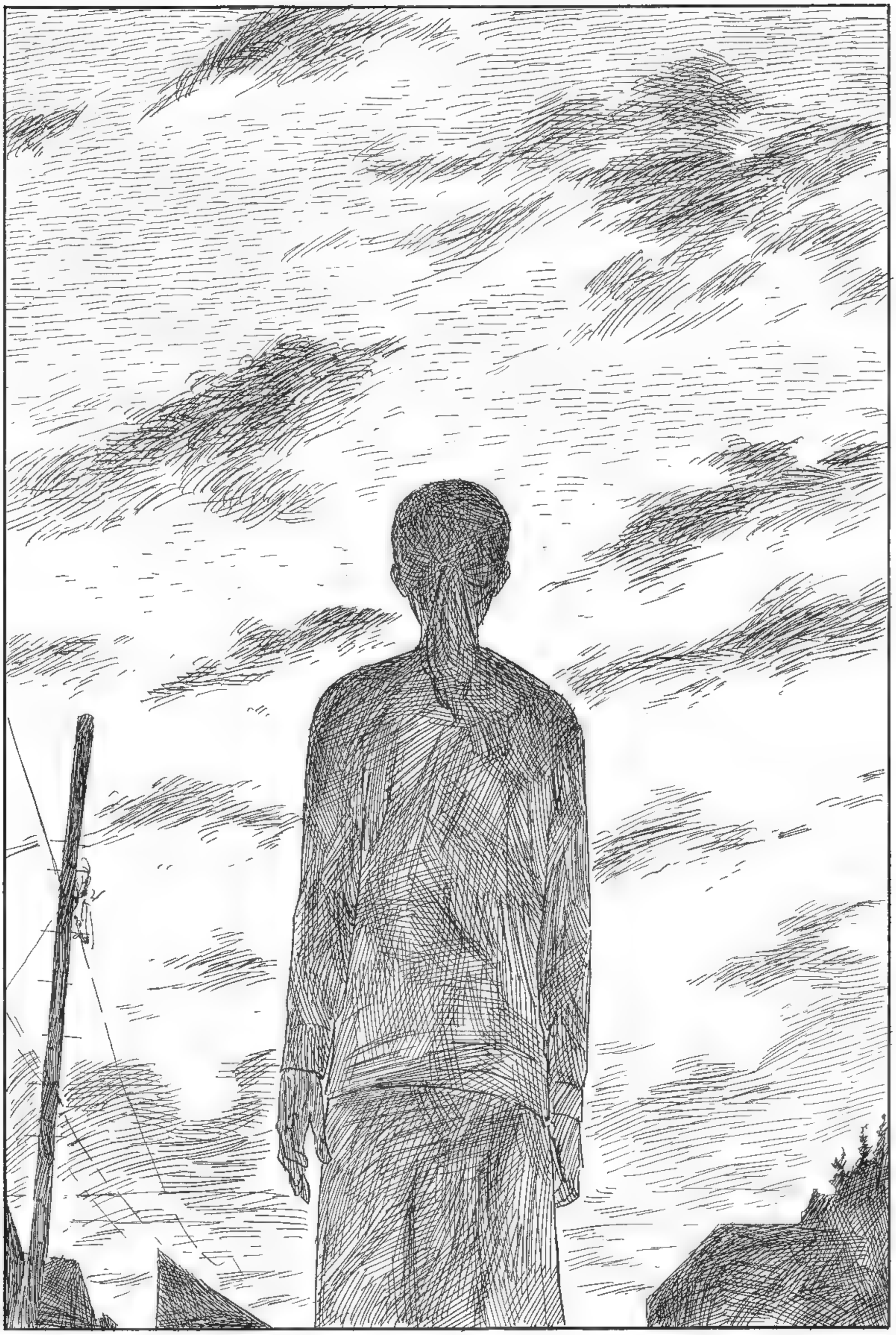
I

LEFT MYSELF BEHIND,

CAME BACK HERE,

AND I

AND I SAW IT.



THAT JUST WENT ON AND ON.

THE SKY BEYOND WAS FILLED WITH A BEAUTIFUL SUNSET

YES... I FINALLY REMEMBERED.

I'D SEEN THAT SUNSET BEFORE.

I'D FORGOTTEN FOR SO LONG...

OR NO, I HADN'T FORGOTTEN.

I'D JUST PUT A LID OVER IT...

TUMP
TUMP

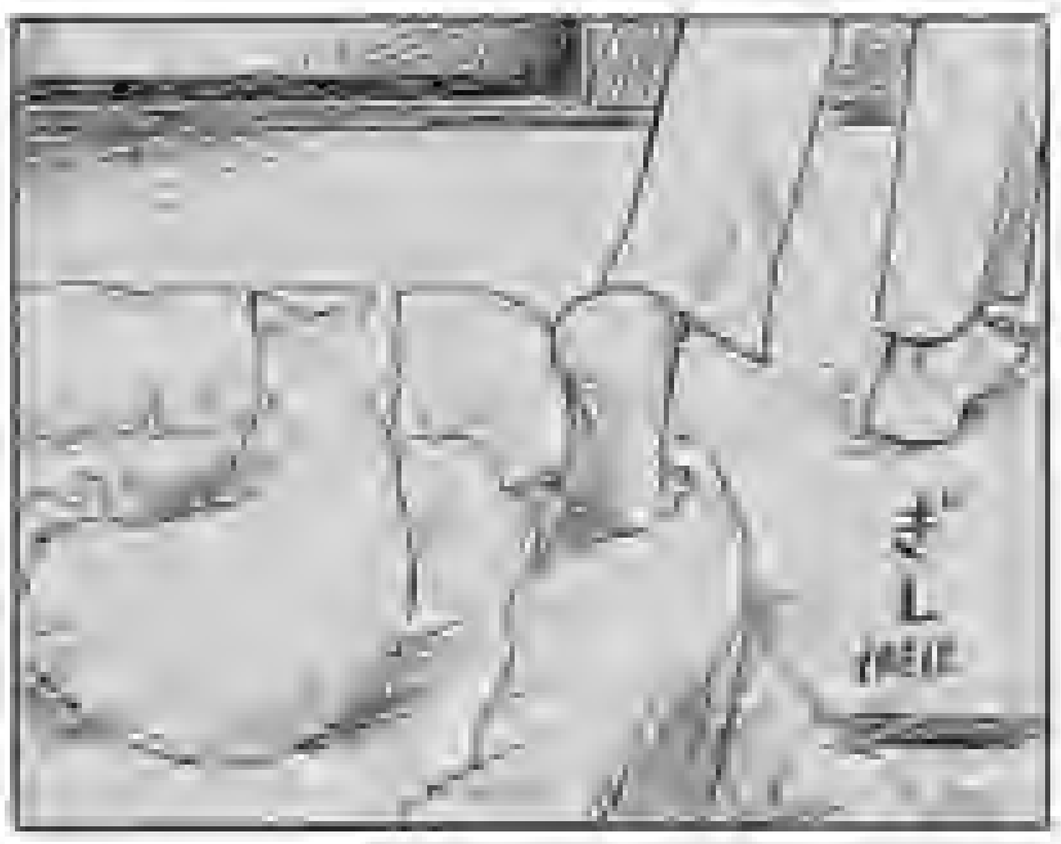


Photo Album

I BROUGHT IT WITH ME.

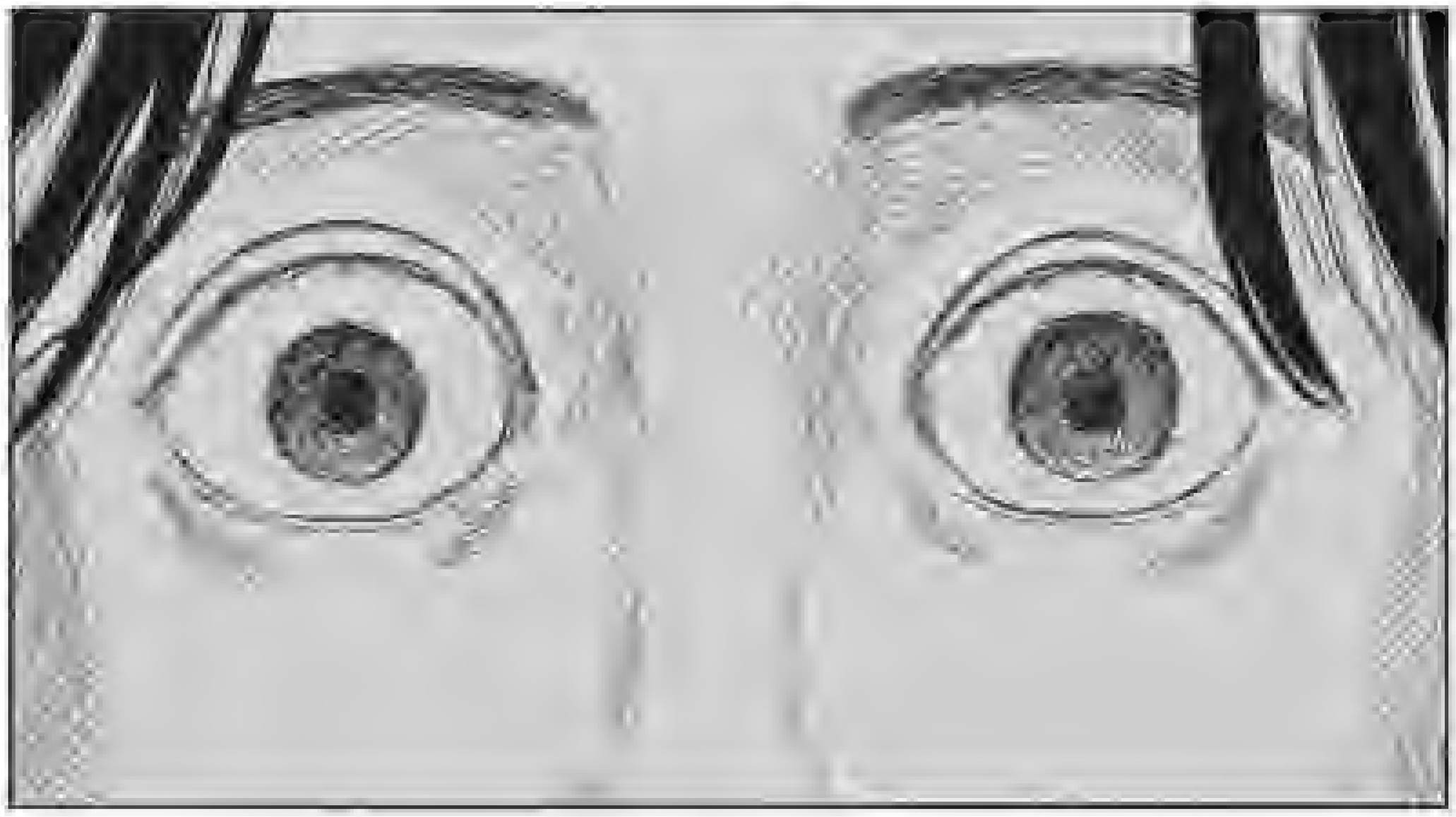
THIS ALBUM.

WANT TO TAKE A LOOK?

SEI.

Seiichi
at birth

1981.
3.
19



Selick
at birth
1981
3
19

BACK THEN...
THAT'S RIGHT...
YOU WERE BORN...
BACK WHEN

ALL THE TIME.

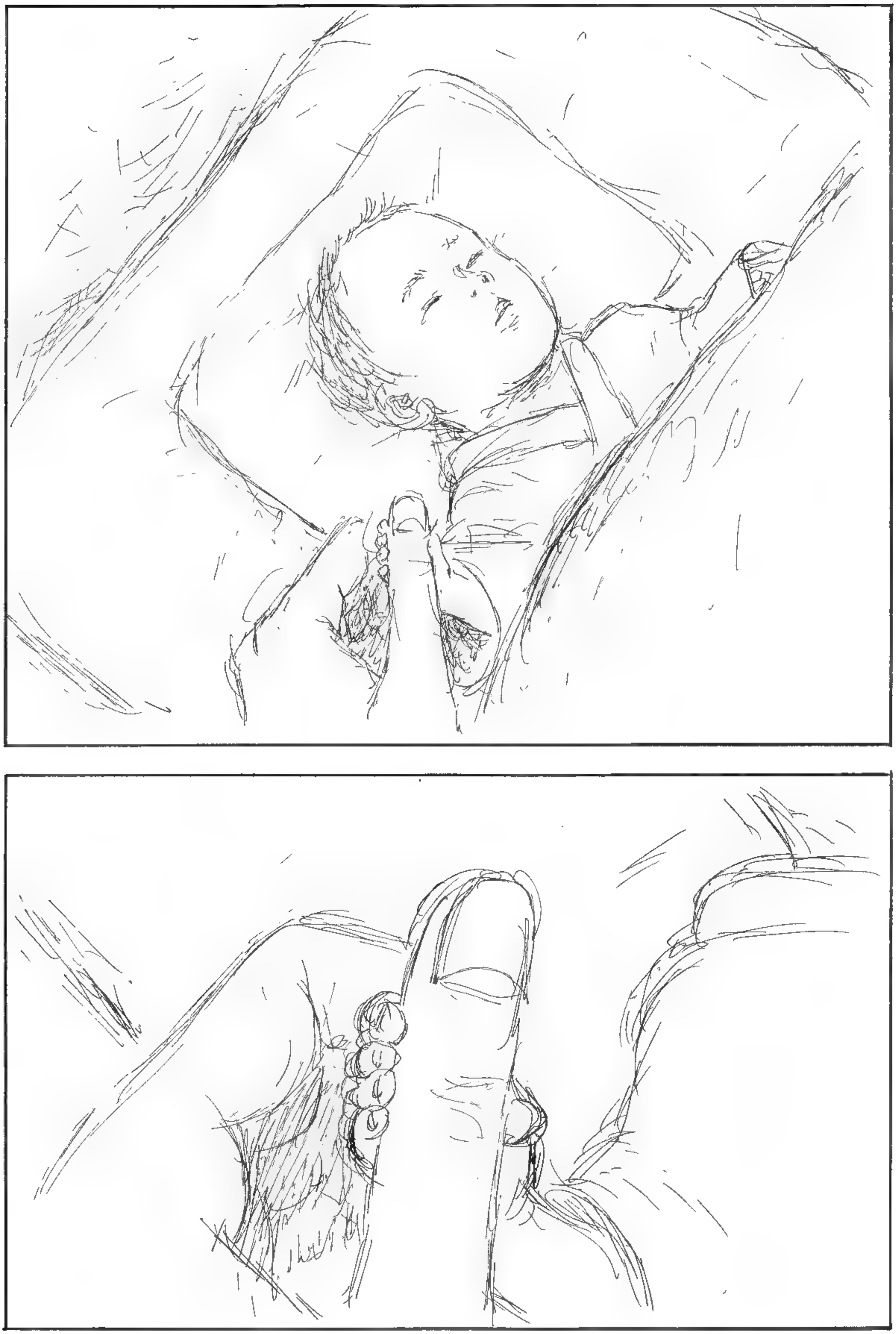
I WAS ALONE WITH YOU

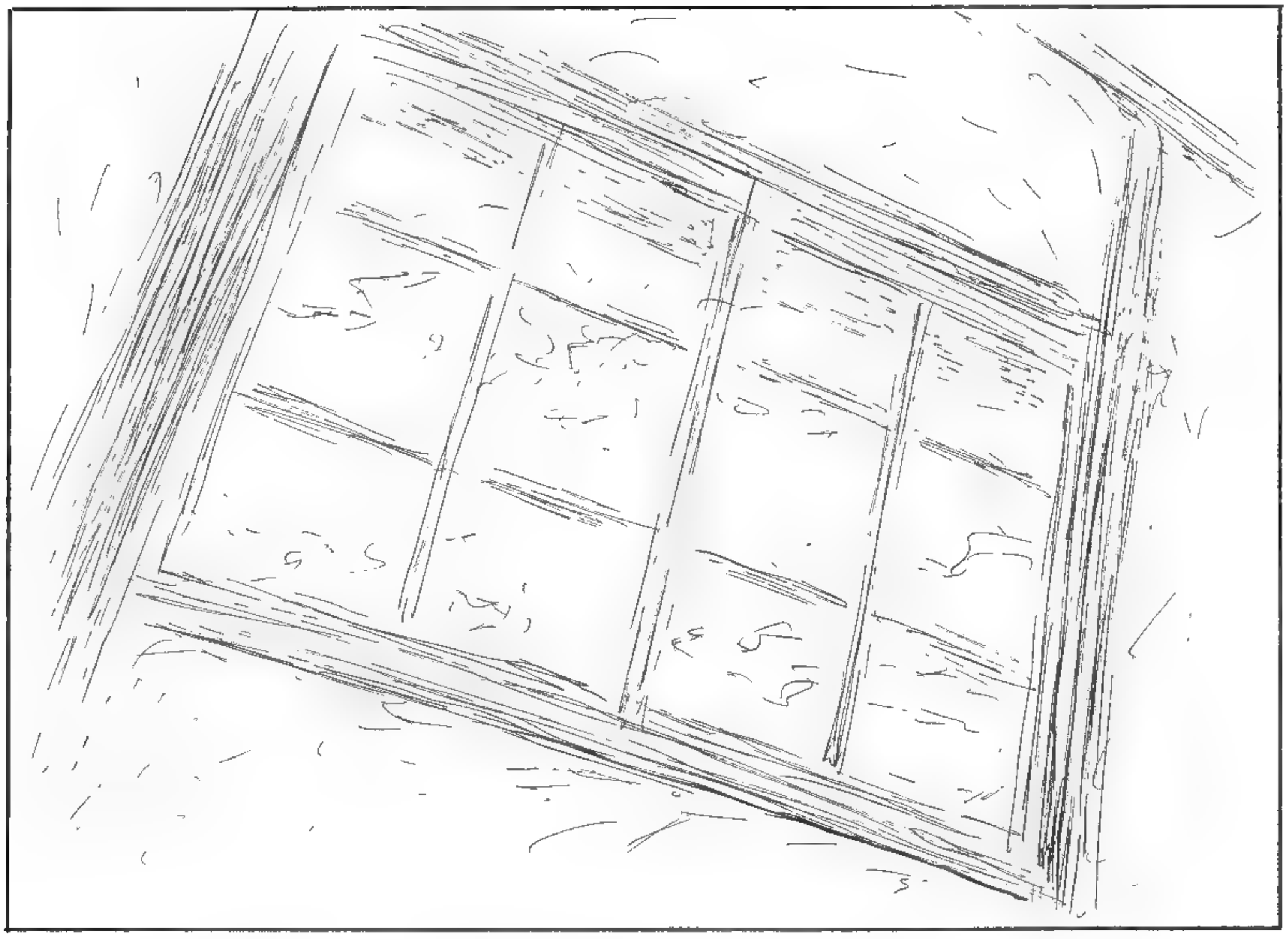
HE NEVER CAME HOME.

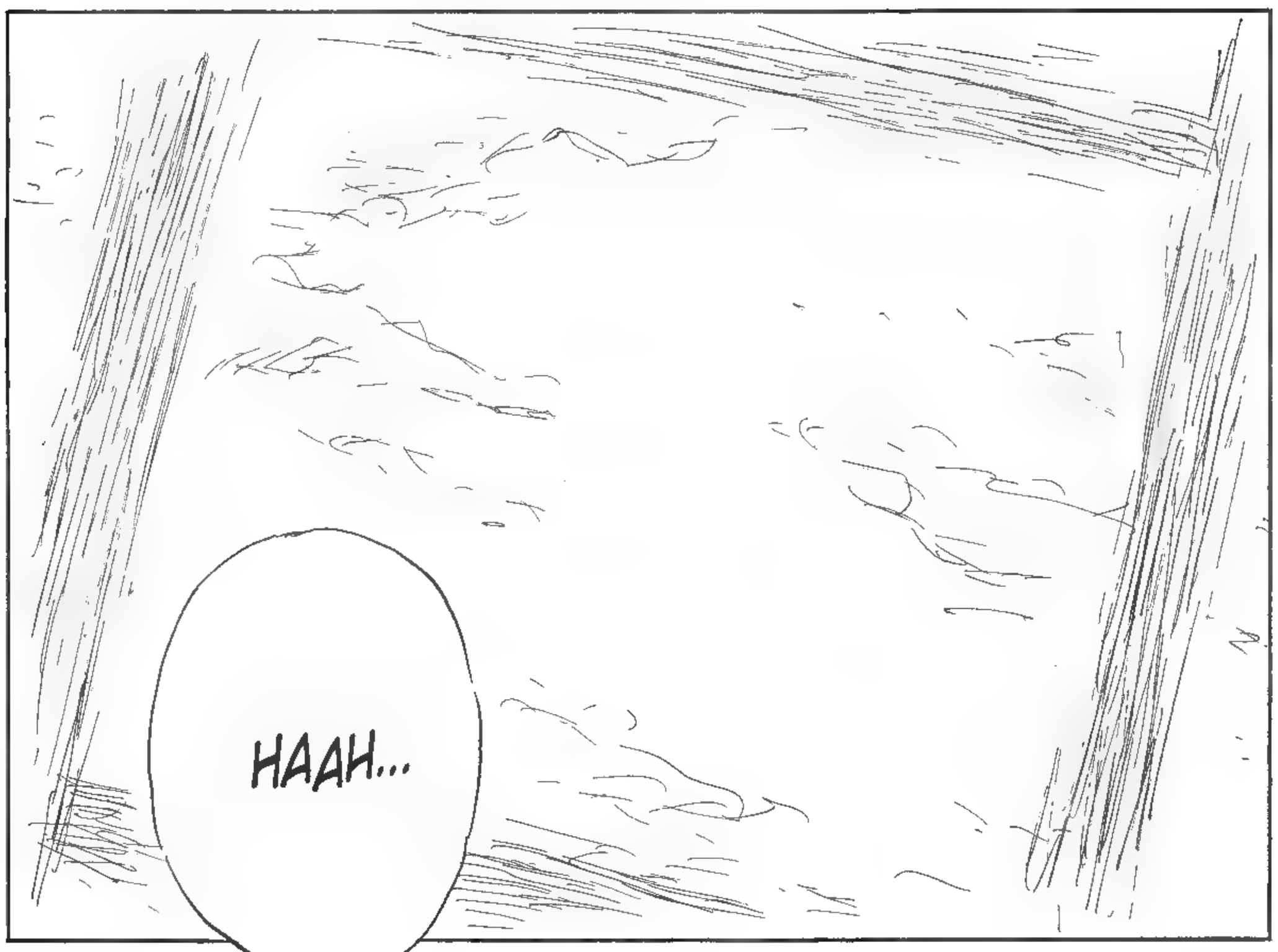
I WAS ALWAYS ALONE.

ICHIRO WAS ALWAYS SAYING HE WAS BUSY WITH WORK.

SUCH A LONELY TIME FOR ME.
THAT WAS
SEI...
SEIII.






HAAH...

NOW...

I REMEMBER.

NOW

THAT HOUSE.

GRANDPA'S HOUSE.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE.

THAT HOUSE I LIVED IN

AN OLD WOODEN GATE.

IT HAD

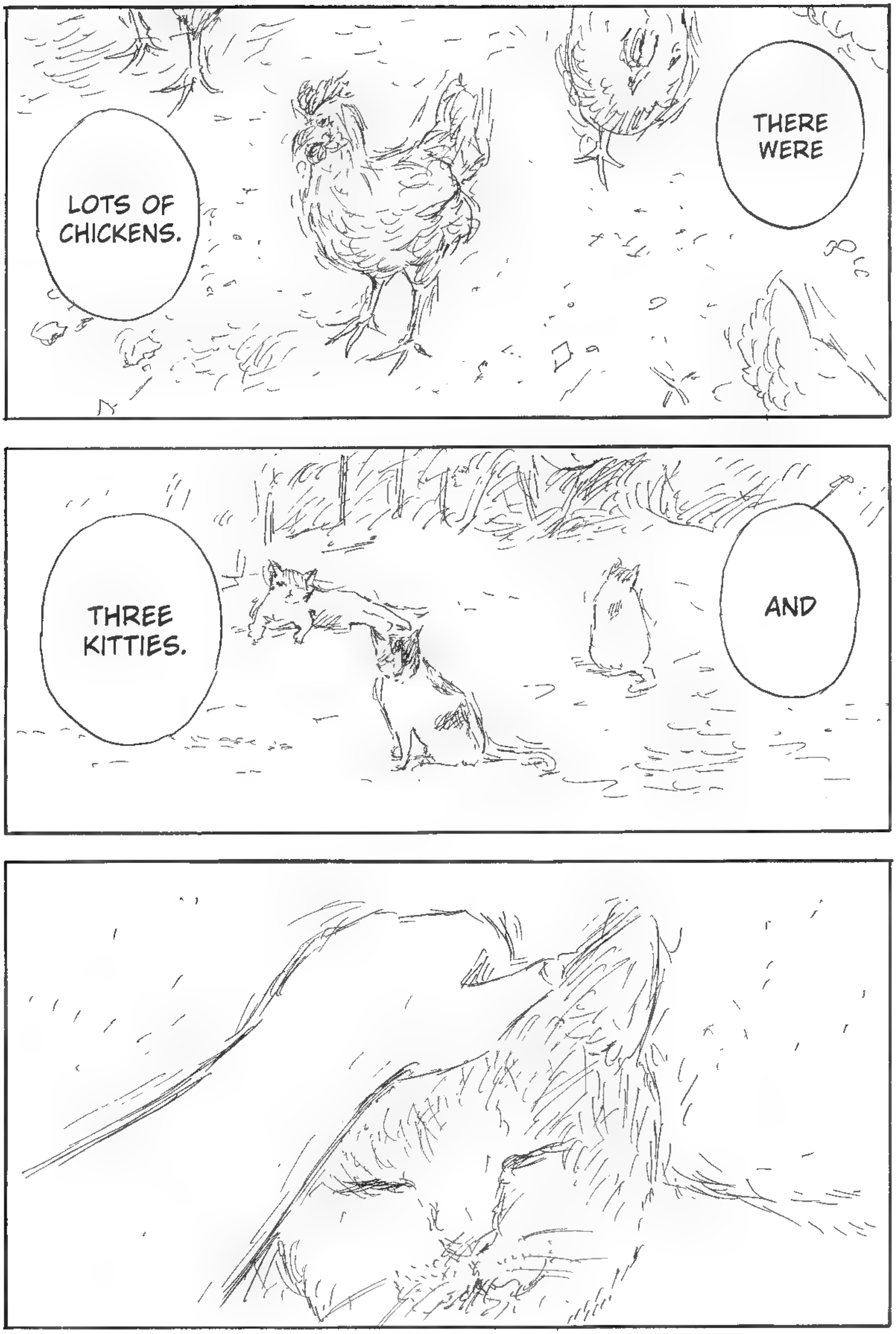
WENT THROUGH IT,

WHEN YOU

THERE WERE FIELDS OF TOMATOES,

EGGPLANT, CUCUMBERS,

CORN.


LOTS OF CHICKENS.
THERE WERE
THREE KITTIES.
AND

IT WAS AN OLD HOUSE,

WITH A LONG VERANDA.

GRANDPA!

AND THERE'S GRANDPA.

THAT'S WHERE HE WOULD SIT.

HEE HEE

FIVE, MAYBE?

UNTIL I WAS FOUR...

HOW LONG WAS IT THAT I LIVED THERE?

MOM WAS NICE.

BACK THEN,

WHEN WE LIVED AT THAT HOUSE,

DAD WAS NICE, TOO.

BUT IT WAS ALL A LIE.

MOM HATED THAT HOUSE *AND* GRANDPA.

THE TRUTH IS,

LET'S MOVE OUT.

SO MOM SAID,

WAS TUCKED ON A BACK-STREET.

OUR NEW HOUSE

CLOCKS,

MASKS,

IT WAS FULL OF CURIOS

TUBS,

DOLLS,

WHEELS.

DAD HAD GATHERED.

WOULD GET MAD AT DAD.
MOM
AND THEY'D BOTH
GET MAD AT ME.

WHEN MY SISTER ETSUKO WAS BORN.

I THINK I WAS... SIX

IN THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HOUSE.

ETSUKO WAS ALWAYS SLEEPING

SHE HAD A WEAK CON-STITUTION.

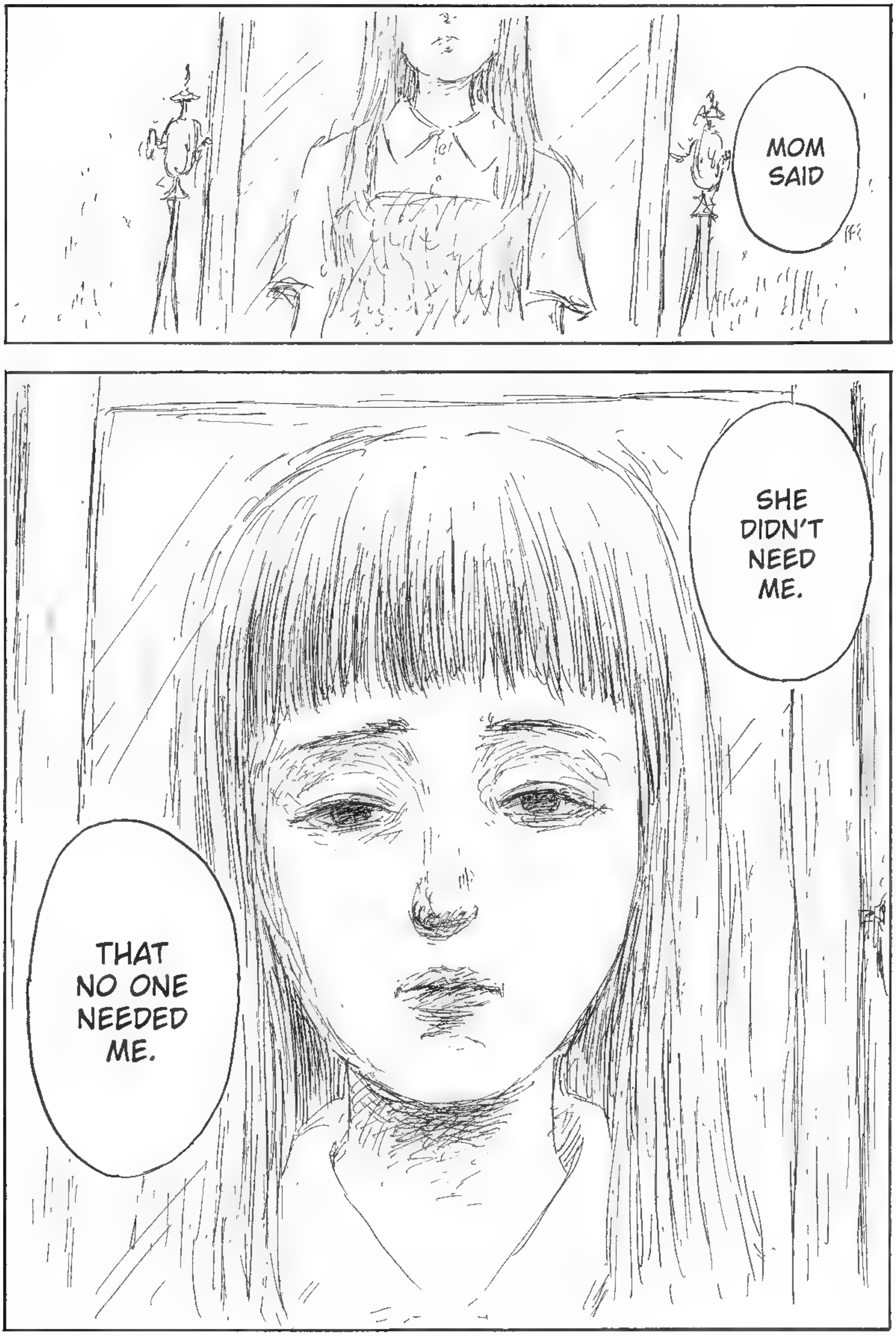
TALKING SWEETLY TO HER.

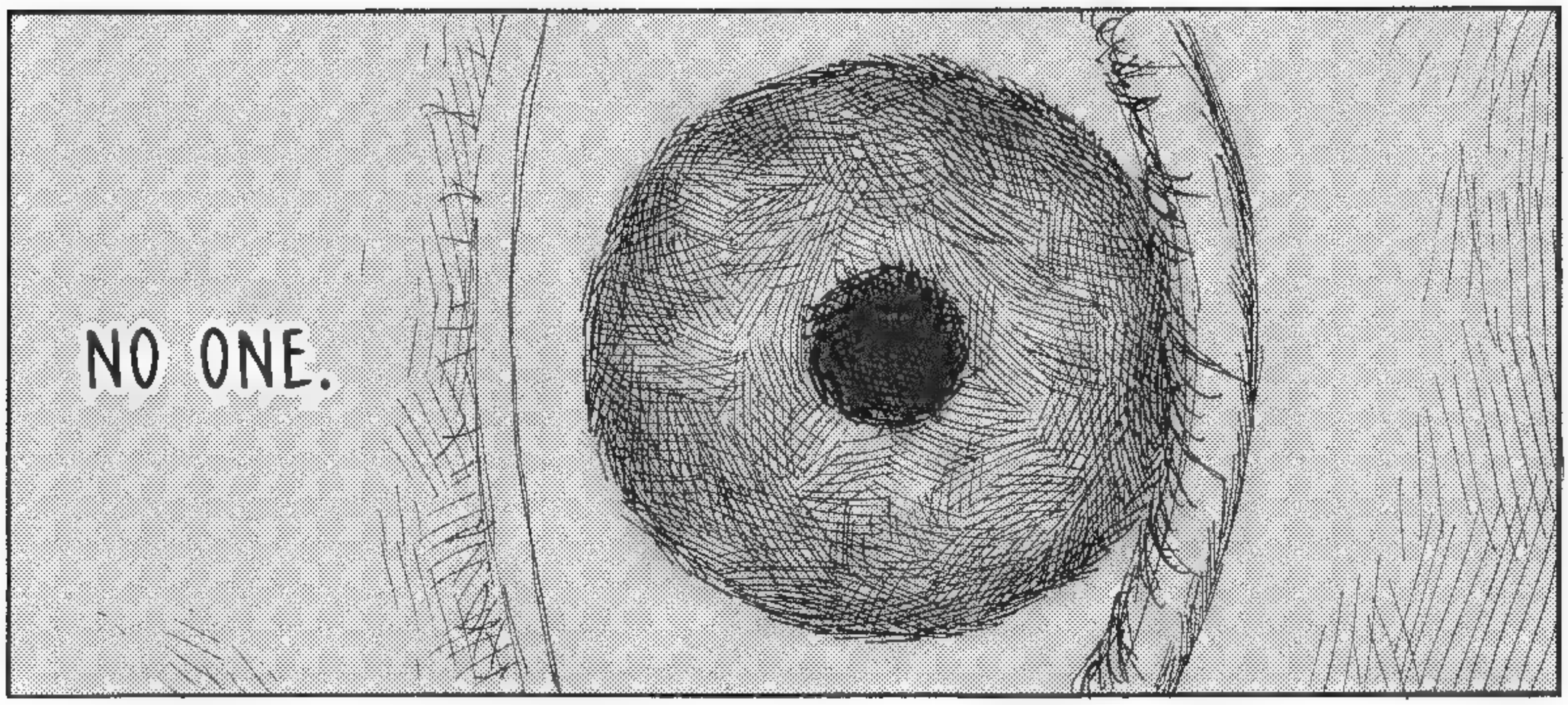
MOM

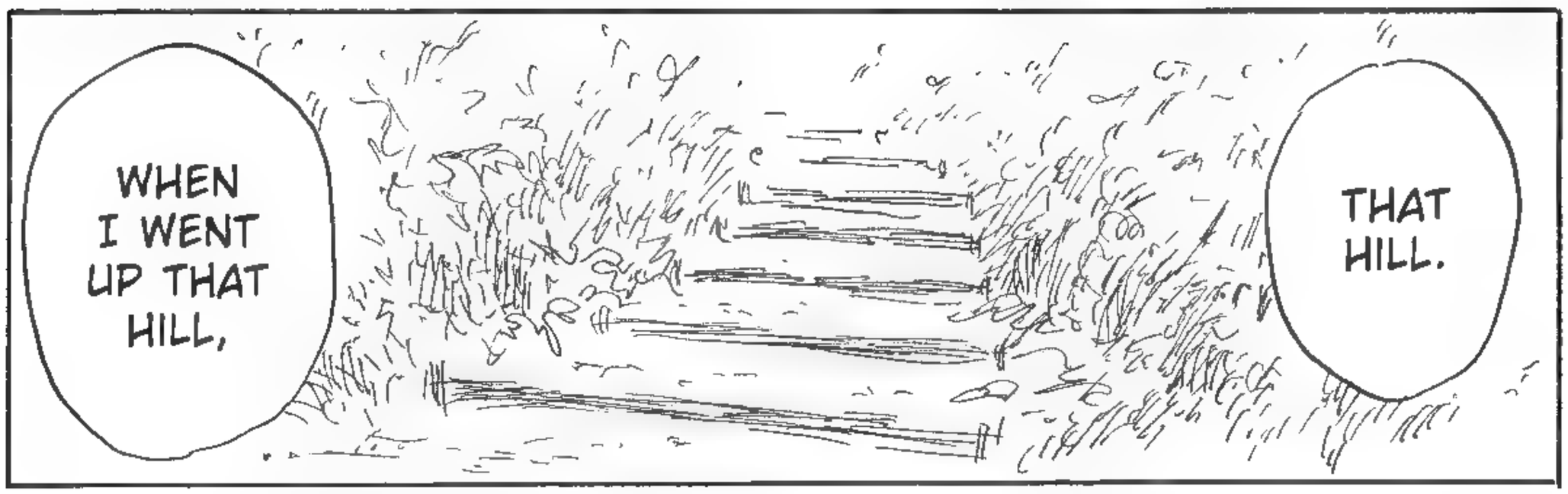
WAS ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF HER,

WELL...

BUT ME,


MOM SAID
SHE DIDN'T NEED ME.
THAT NO ONE NEEDED ME.


NO ONE.


WHEN I WENT UP THAT HILL,
THAT HILL.

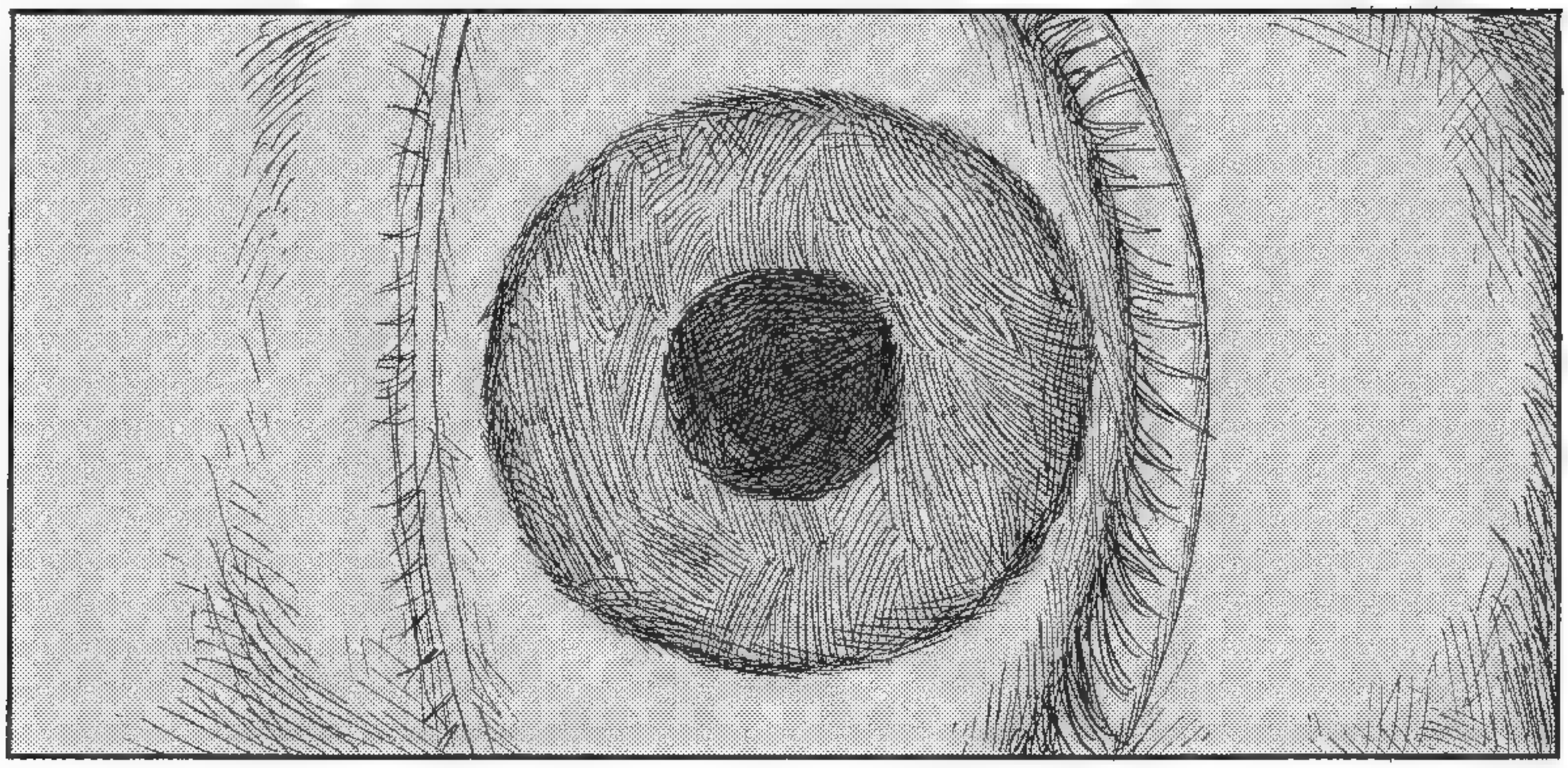
I COULD SEE THE CITY.

FAMILIES, BURSTING AT THE SEAMS.

EACH AND EVERY HOUSE WAS STUFFED FULL OF PEOPLE,

IT WAS DISGUSTING.

I WISHED THEY ALL WOULD BURN.



IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
I WAS CLOSE WITH A GIRL NAMED TAMAE.
IT'S NOT LIKE I DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS.

TALKING IN THE CORNER OF THE PLAYGROUND.
WE WERE ALWAYS TOGETHER.

I COULD ONLY TALK ONE-ON-ONE.

BUT THE THING IS,

I WASN'T GOOD IN GROUPS.

AND STOPPED SPENDING TIME ALONE WITH ME.

FELL IN WITH SOME OTHER KIDS,

AND THEN TAMAE

SO I ENDED UP ALL BY MYSELF.

I WASN'T ABLE TO APPROACH HER,

THAT MY DAD WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR.
IT WAS AROUND THEN I REALIZED
EITHER WAY, IT MADE MY MOM GO FUNNY.
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A COWORKER FROM THE PACHINKO FACTORY,
OR MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE.
SHE TOOK OUT ALL THAT RAGE ON ME.
AND I GUESS

I WASN'T TALKING TO ANYONE.

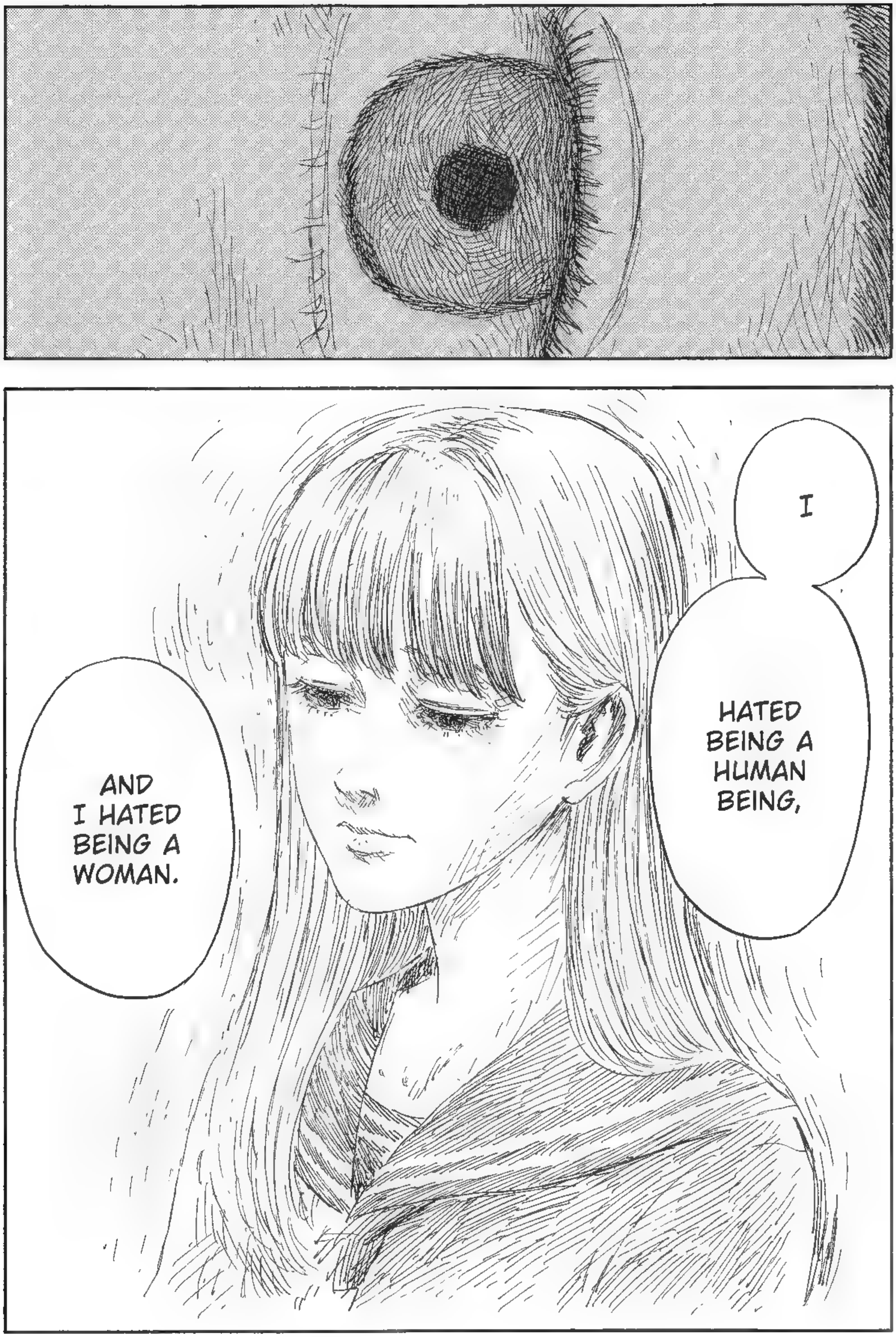
BY MIDDLE SCHOOL,

PUT MY HEAD DOWN ON MY DESK AND CLOSE MY EYES.

EVERY DAY, I'D JUST

SO THAT I WOULDN'T GET IN THE WAY OF THEIR HAPPINESS.

SO THAT I WASN'T BOTHERING ANYONE.


I
HATED BEING A HUMAN BEING,
AND I HATED BEING A WOMAN.

WHEN I STARTED HIGH SCHOOL,

SOMEONE APPROACHED *ME.*

BUT THEN,

"YOU LOOK SO GLUM.

SACHIKO TOLD ME,

WHY DON'T YOU JOIN THE DRAMA CLUB?"

IT'S SUCH A WASTE OF A PRETTY FACE LIKE YOURS.

WHEN I WAS ACTING, I STOPPED BEING ME.

ACTING WAS FUN.

AND STOPPED FEELING THE GUILT AND SHAME OF LIVING.

I BECAME SOMEONE ELSE,

TAUGHT ME THINGS.

ALL KINDS OF GREAT THINGS.

SACHIKO

BUT SHE ALSO TALKED WITH ME ONE-ON-ONE.

SHE TALKED TO EVERYONE,

THE WHOLE DRAMA CLUB WENT TO TOKYO TOGETHER.

IN THE SUMMER OF MY SECOND YEAR,

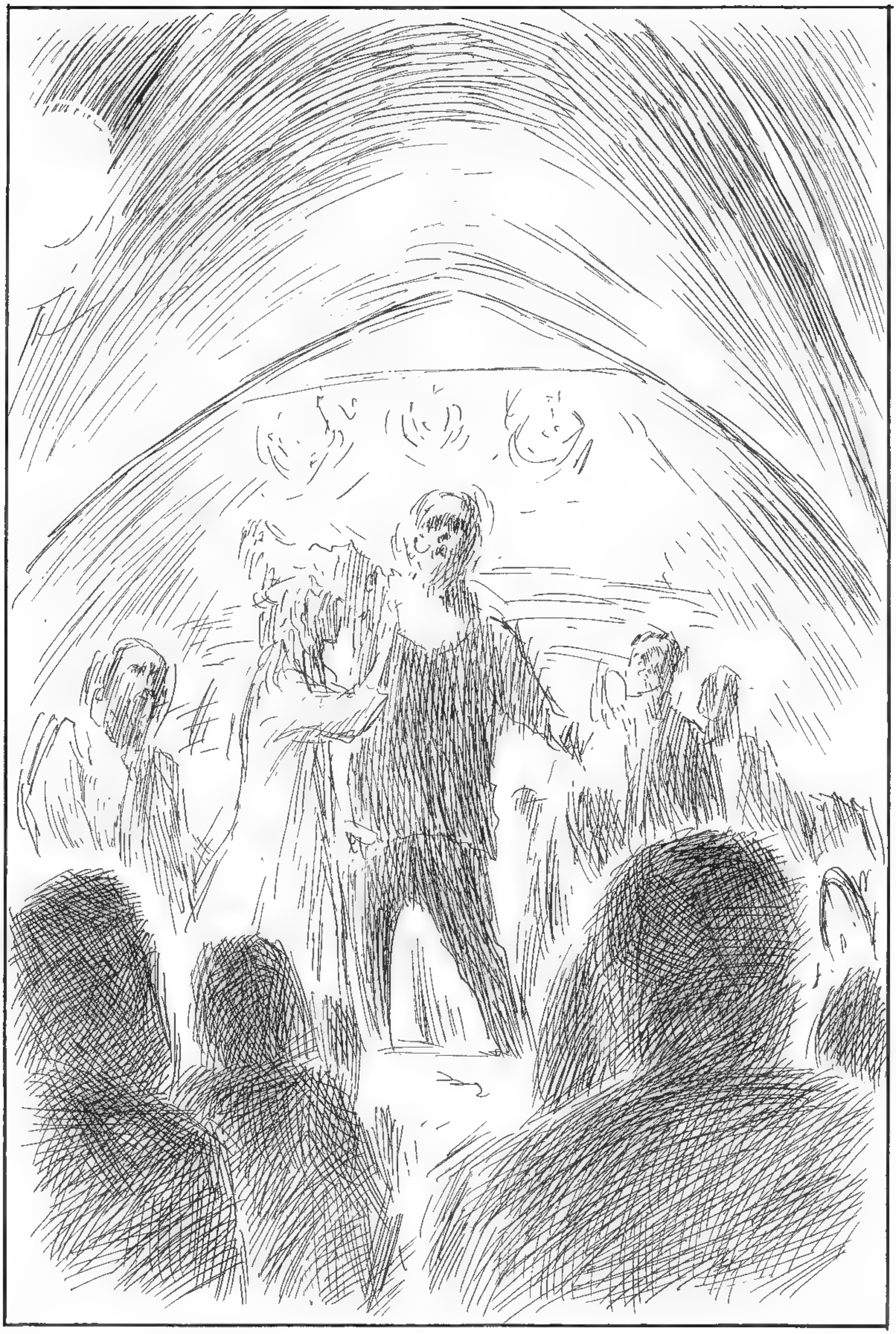
SACHIKO SAID THERE WAS A PERFORMANCE SHE WANTED US ALL TO SEE.

MY FIRST TIME IN TOKYO.

THAT WAS

THERE WAS A TENT IN THE PARK,

AND WE ALL WENT INSIDE.



THE WHOLE PRODUCTION WAS SO RAW AND EXPOSED.

IT WAS SO ANGRY.

ARE YOU HAPPY THE WAY YOU ARE?

IT POINTED ITS FINGER AT ME AND ASKED,

JUST GRAB ME AND TAKE ME AWAY.

FAR AWAY.

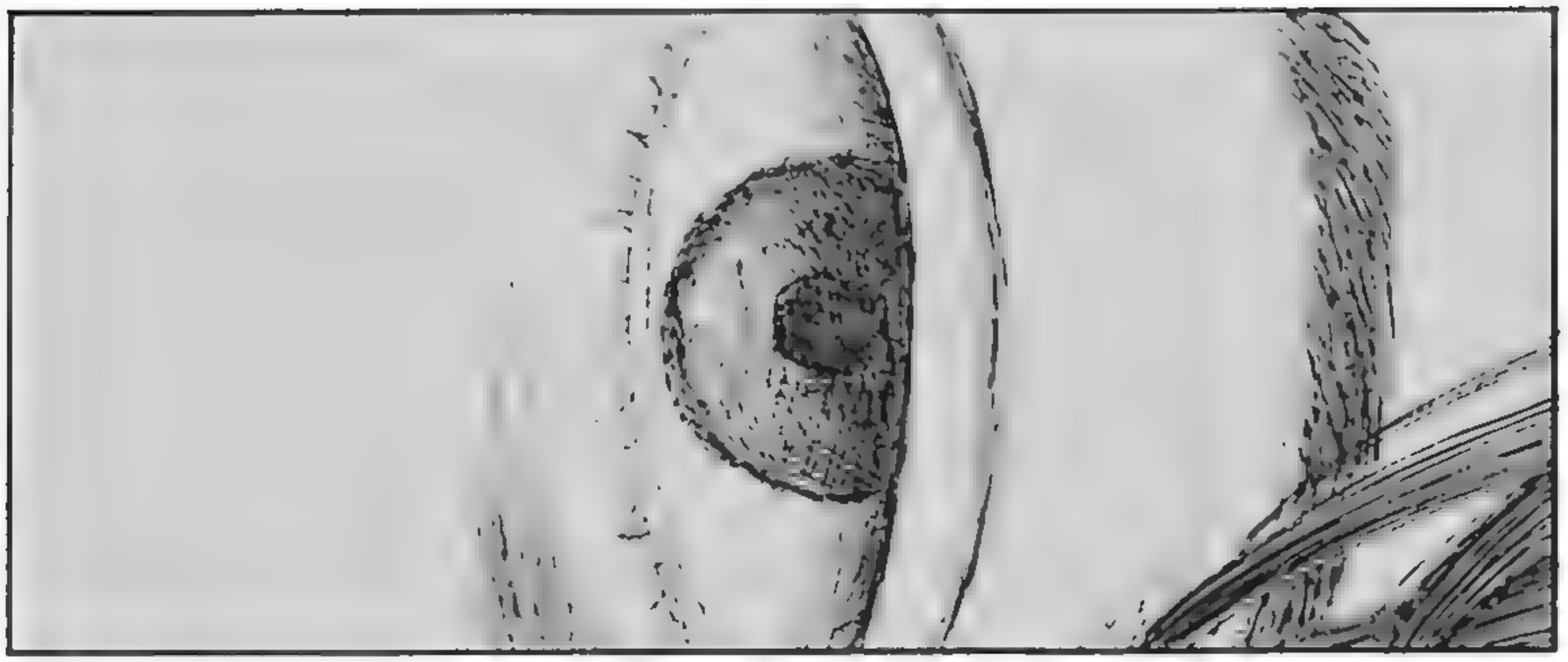
IT WOULD CARRY ME OFF.

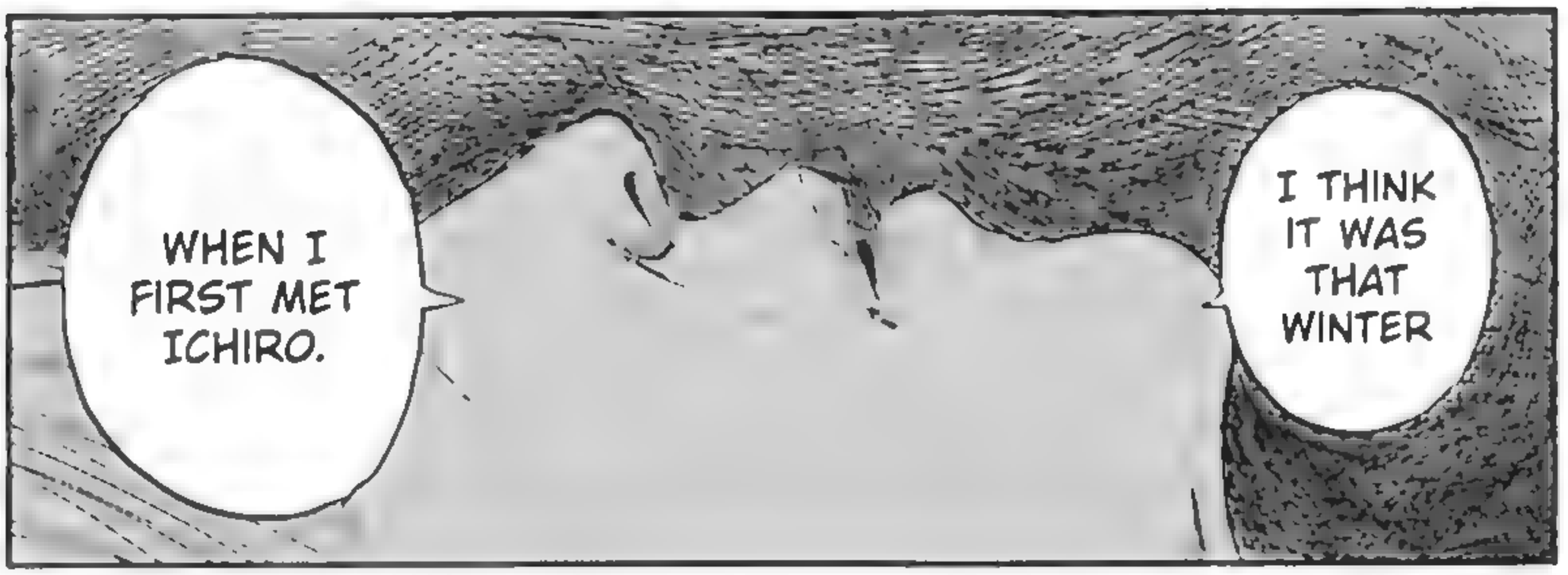
IN THAT MOMENT,

I DECIDED I WANTED TO BE AN ACTOR.

SOMEDAY,

I WANTED TO GO TO TOKYO AND JOIN THAT WORLD.




WHEN I FIRST MET ICHIRO.
I THINK IT WAS THAT WINTER

TO THIS PLACE WHERE EVERYONE HUNG OUT.
SACHIKO HAD INVITED ME

WAS THERE.

ICHIRO

I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.

WHAT DID WE TALK ABOUT THAT TIME?

THAT'S ALL.

I THOUGHT, HERE'S A GUY WHO'S EASY TO GET ALONG WITH.

I BARELY SPOKE AT ALL WITH MY MOTHER AND FATHER.

BY THIS TIME,

A DESIGN SCHOOL.

IF THEY'D LET ME, I'D FIGURE OUT MY OWN LIVING EXPENSES.

I TOLD THEM I WANTED TO GO TO A TRADE SCHOOL IN TOKYO.

TO DO WHATEVER I WANTED.

THEY TOLD ME

HAD GOTTEN A LOT HEALTHIER BY THEN.

MY SISTER

SHE WAS STILL PRETTY FRAGILE, AFTER ALL.

MOM AND DAD WERE KIND TO HER.

I BARELY TALKED TO MY SISTER EITHER. TO ETSUKO.

YOU KNOW,

SHE HAD TO STAY AND HELP HER FAMILY.

SACHIKO SAID SHE WAS JEALOUS I WAS GOING TO TOKYO.

FOR THE DRAMA CLUB'S FINAL PERFOR-MANCE.

SACHIKO AND I COWROTE A SCRIPT

WHERE SHE IS NOW, WHAT SHE'S DOING.

I WONDER

I LEFT THAT TOWN,

THE DAY

WHAT WAS I THINKING?

THERE IN THE TRAIN,

I THINK IT WAS...

I FINALLY MADE IT OUT.

I'LL NEVER COME BACK.

GOING TO THE OTHER SIDE.

I'M GOING TO TOKYO TO BE AN ACTOR,

MY LIFE
IS ABOUT TO BEGIN.

LESS THAN A HUNDRED SQUARE FEET.

MY ROOM WAS

IN ASAGAYA.

A HOVEL

I WENT TO CLASS AND DREW,

DURING THE DAY,

I THINK MY FIRST JOB WAS AT A CAFÉ.

AND AT NIGHT I WORKED.

MY HOPE WAS

AND...

TO GET AN AUDITION,

AND JOIN THAT THEATER TROUPE.

TO GET AN AUDITION,

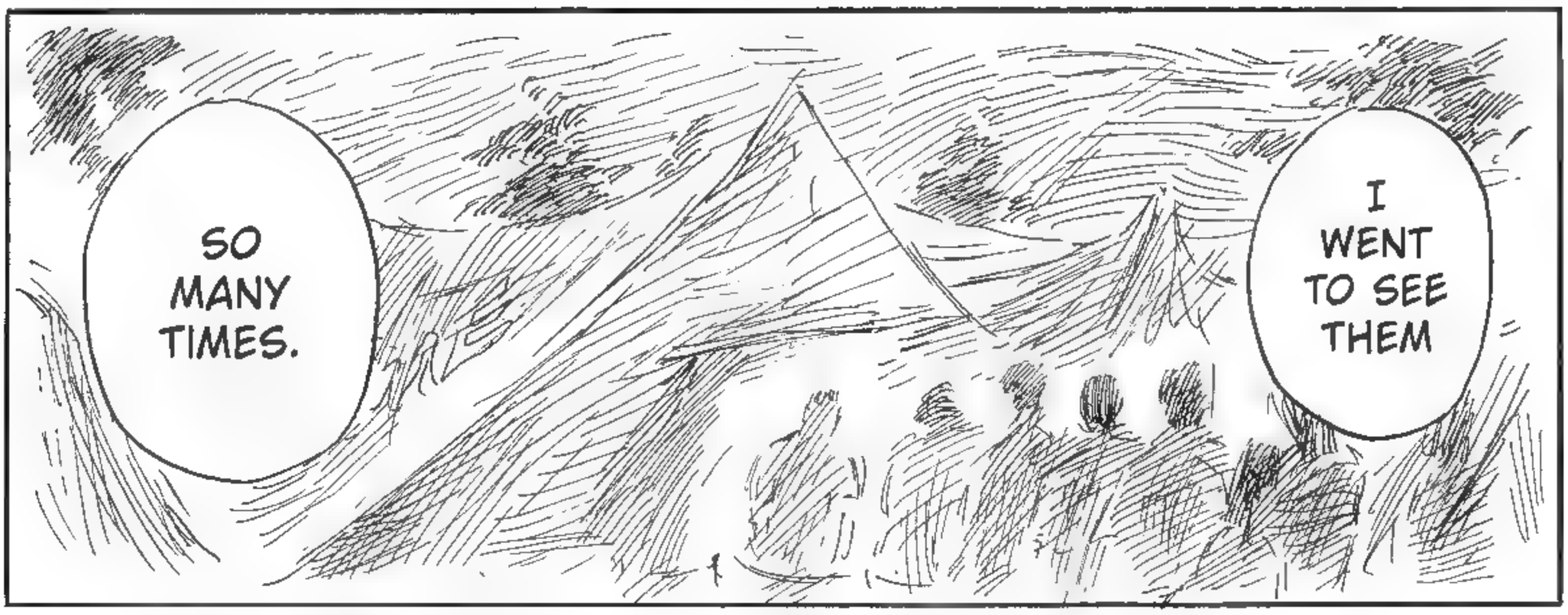
AND JOIN THAT THEATER TROUPE.

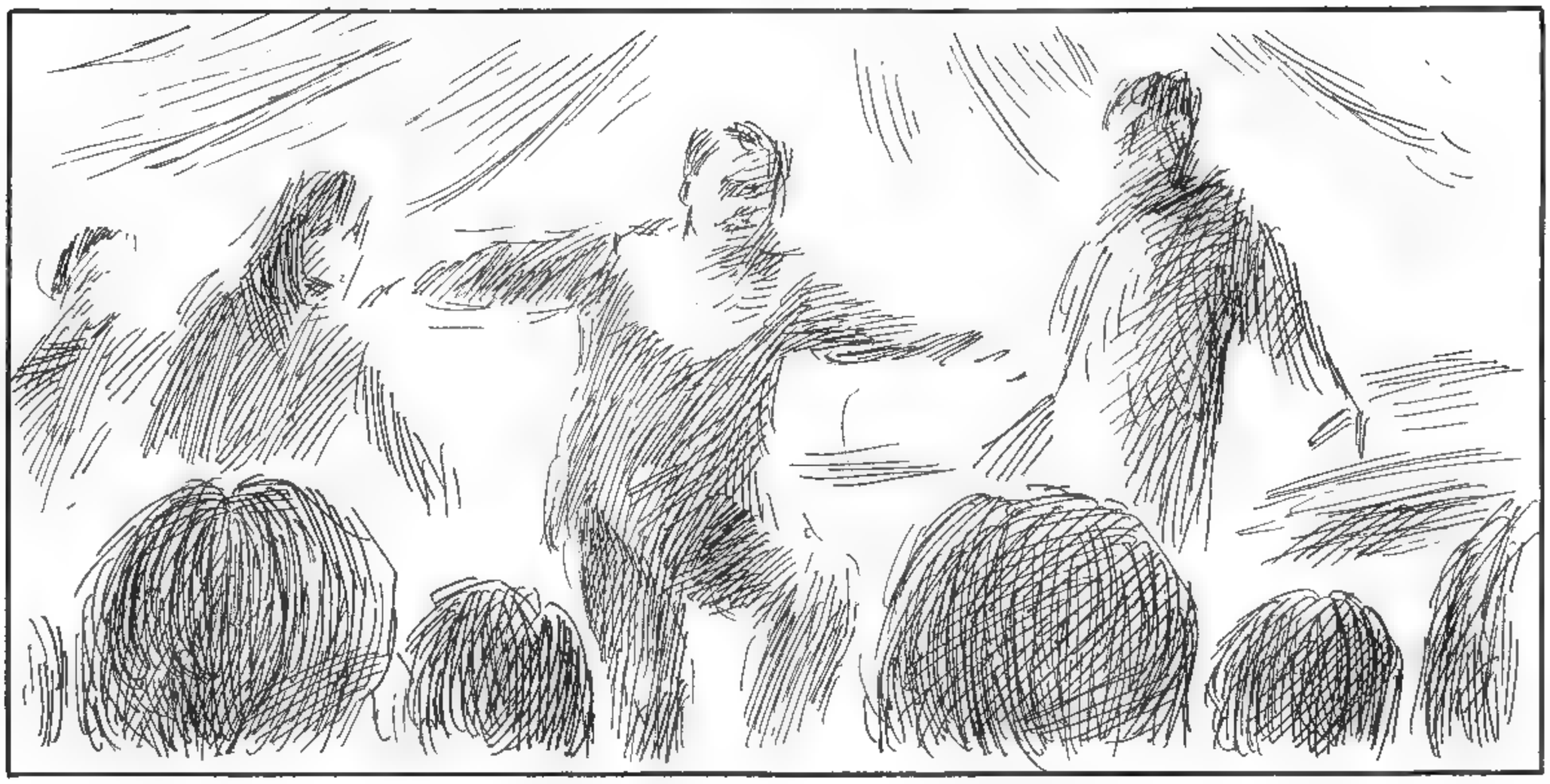
MY HOPE WAS

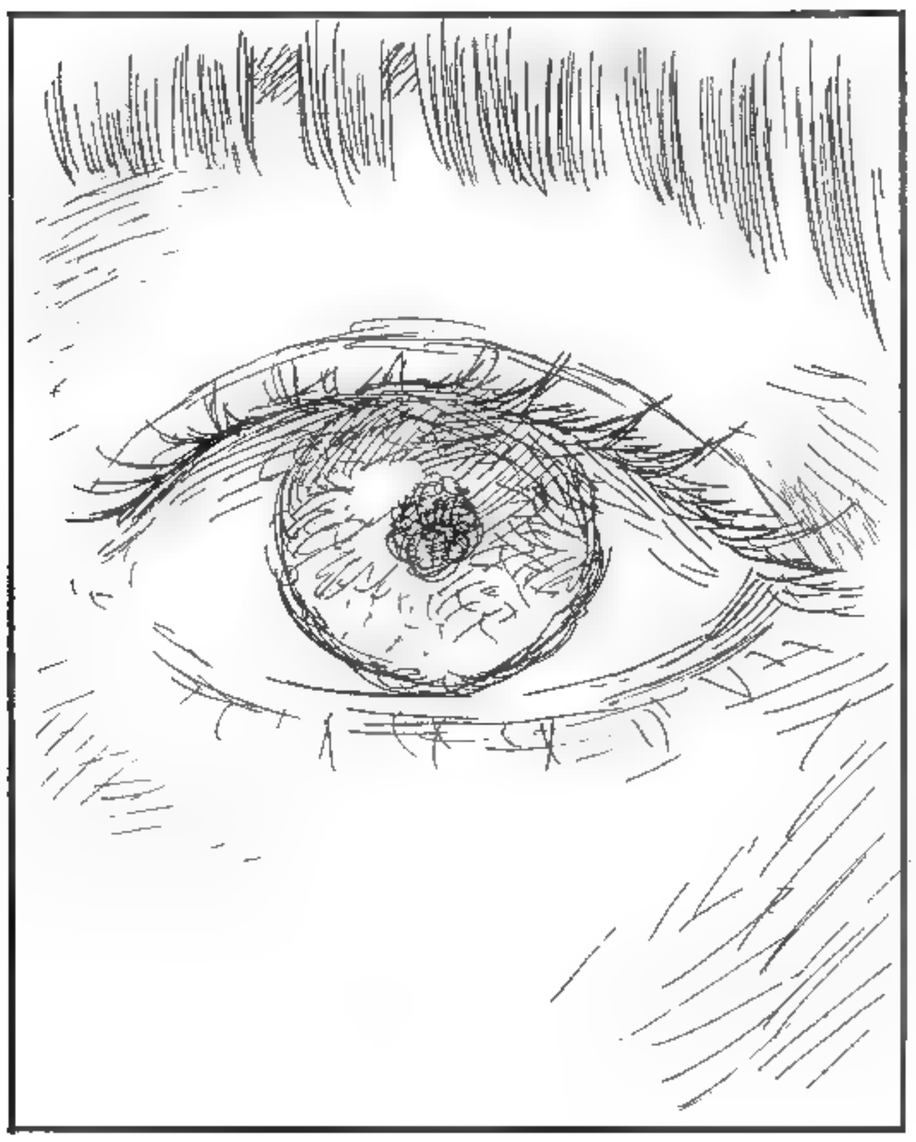
WERE THEY EVEN LOOKING FOR PEOPLE?

BUT HOW COULD I MAKE THAT HAPPEN?

WHAT SHOULD I DO?


SO MANY TIMES.
I WENT TO SEE THEM





AFTER ONE PERFOR-MANCE,

THE GUY WHO LED THE TROUPE WAS THERE... OUTSIDE THE TENT.

BUT I...

TO SAY, "PLEASE LET ME JOIN."

I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO APPROACH HIM.

AS IT WAS,

I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE I COULD DO ANYTHING.

I WASN'T READY.

I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING.

I HAD TO LEARN MORE, STUDY MORE.

I STARTED DATING ONE OF MY CO-WORKERS

FROM THE CAFÉ.

AT SOME POINT,

ALWAYS PLAYING GUITAR IN HIS ROOM.

HE WAS A MUSICIAN.

MORE OR LESS UNTIL I GRADUATED ?

I GUESS I DATED HIM...

I DON'T REMEMBER IT TOO WELL ANYMORE.

I GOT THE SENSE HE WAS CHEATING ON ME...

SO I STARTED DISTANCING MYSELF FROM HIM... GRADUALLY STOPPED SEEING HIM ALTOGETHER ...

PAWN SHOP

AND AT TWENTY... I GOT A JOB AT AN ADVERTISING AGENCY.

I GRADUATED FROM DESIGN SCHOOL,

IN THOSE DAYS, WE STILL DID IT ALL BY HAND.

HOT SPRING RESORT
THE WHOLE FAMILY!!
POOL
BIG WHEEL
e have everything
popular city bikes
and ladies' bikes

I DID ADS FOR MAGAZINES,

NEWS-PAPERS.

A HOT SPRING RESORT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!!
BIG WHEEL

I WAS EXHAUSTED ALL THE TIME.

THEY SURE KEPT ME BUSY.

FROM MORNING 'TIL NIGHT. LOTS OF RUSH JOBS.

I KEPT GOING TO SEE THAT THEATER TROUPE.

BUT EVEN SO,

SOMEONE CAME UP TO ME.

THEN ONE TIME,

HE SAID, "AREN'T YOU SEIKO TAMIYA?"

"DO YOU REMEMBER ME?" HE ASKED.

IT WAS ICHIRO.

HE'D GOTTEN IN ON THE SECOND TRY.

HE WAS IN HIS THIRD YEAR OF COLLEGE.

SO HE MUST HAVE BEEN ABOUT TWENTY-THREE AT THE TIME.

HE WAS THREE YEARS OLDER THAN ME...

HE'D COME WITH A FRIEND WHO WAS IN THEATER HIMSELF.

TOLD ME HE LIKED THEM, TOO.

HE ASKED ME, "DO YOU LIKE THIS GROUP?"

ODEN
THE THREE OF US WENT DRINKING.
AFTER-WARDS,
HOW I WANTED TO JOIN THAT TROUPE SOMEDAY.
I TOLD THEM HOW I WANTED TO BE AN ACTOR,

ICHIRO'S FRIEND,

HE SAID,

THEN THE FRIEND,

ARE YOU OKAY WITH THAT?

THOSE GUYS ALWAYS MAKE THE NEW ACTRESSES GET NAKED.

COME TO THINK OF IT,

HE WAS RIGHT.

I WAS

TAKEN ABACK.

YET SOMEHOW,

IT HAD NEVER OCCURRED TO ME... THAT I'D BE DOING THE SAME THING.

THE WOMEN ALWAYS HAD THEIR BREASTS OUT ONSTAGE.

DURING THEIR PERFOR-MANCES,

DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.

I

AND OFFERED TO LEND ME SOME.

ICHIRO SAID

HE HAD BOOKS OF A LOT OF THEIR SCRIPTS,

GET NAKED?

COULD I

WAS FULL OF BOOKS.
ICHIRO'S ROOM
WROTE POETRY.
SAID HE WANTED TO BE A POET.
HE
AND HE DIDN'T WORK. HIS PARENTS SENT HIM MONEY.
ALL HE THOUGHT ABOUT ALL DAY WAS POETRY.
HE NEVER WENT TO CLASS,

APPEALED TO ME.

I GUESS STUFF LIKE THAT

AND ICHIRO STARTED LIVING THERE WITH ME.

I MOVED INTO A SLIGHTLY BIGGER ROOM,

IT WAS A SECRET THAT HE WAS LIVING WITH ME.

HE KEPT HIS OWN APARTMENT, BUT HE ONLY WENT BACK THERE WHEN HIS PARENTS CAME AROUND.

AND I ALWAYS CAME HOME LATE.
MY JOB WAS GETTING BUSIER AND BUSIER,

BUT HE SAID
HE COULDN'T WRITE ANYTHING.
ICHIRO WOULD BE SITTING AT HIS DESK.

AND HE GOT MORE AND MORE FRUSTRATED.
HE COULDN'T WRITE, HE COULDN'T WRITE...

KEPT MARCHING ON.

TIME

AND ICHIRO WAS TWENTY-SEVEN.

SOON I WAS TWENTY-FOUR,

I STOPPED GOING TO SEE THAT TROUPE PERFORM.

LITTLE BY LITTLE,

ICHIRO FINALLY GRADUATED,

AFTER EIGHT YEARS,

BACK TO THE BOONIES, TO TAKE OVER THE FAMILY ACCOUNTING BUSINESS.

AND SAID HE WAS GOING HOME.

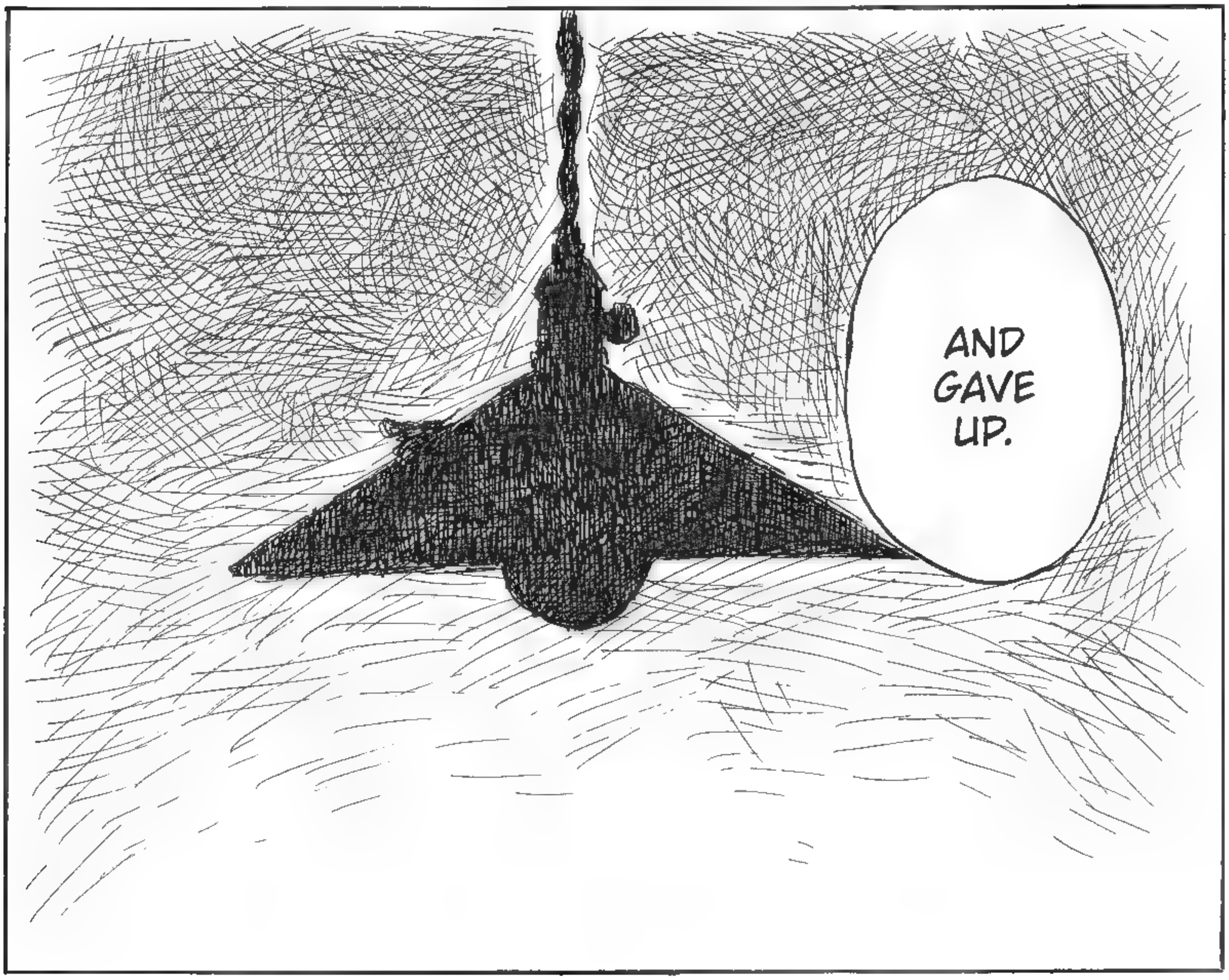
HE WANTED ME TO COME WITH HIM.

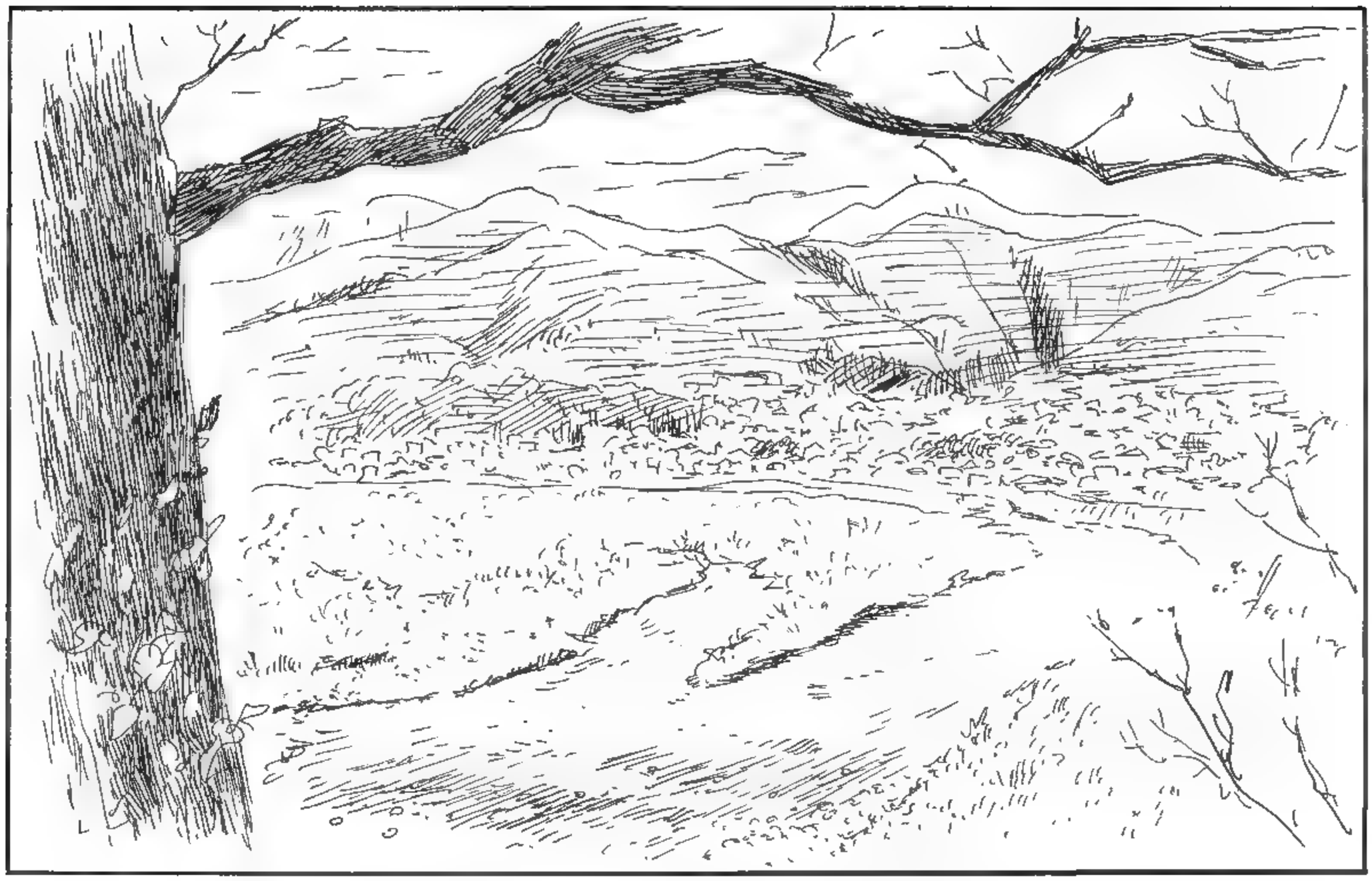
HE SAID

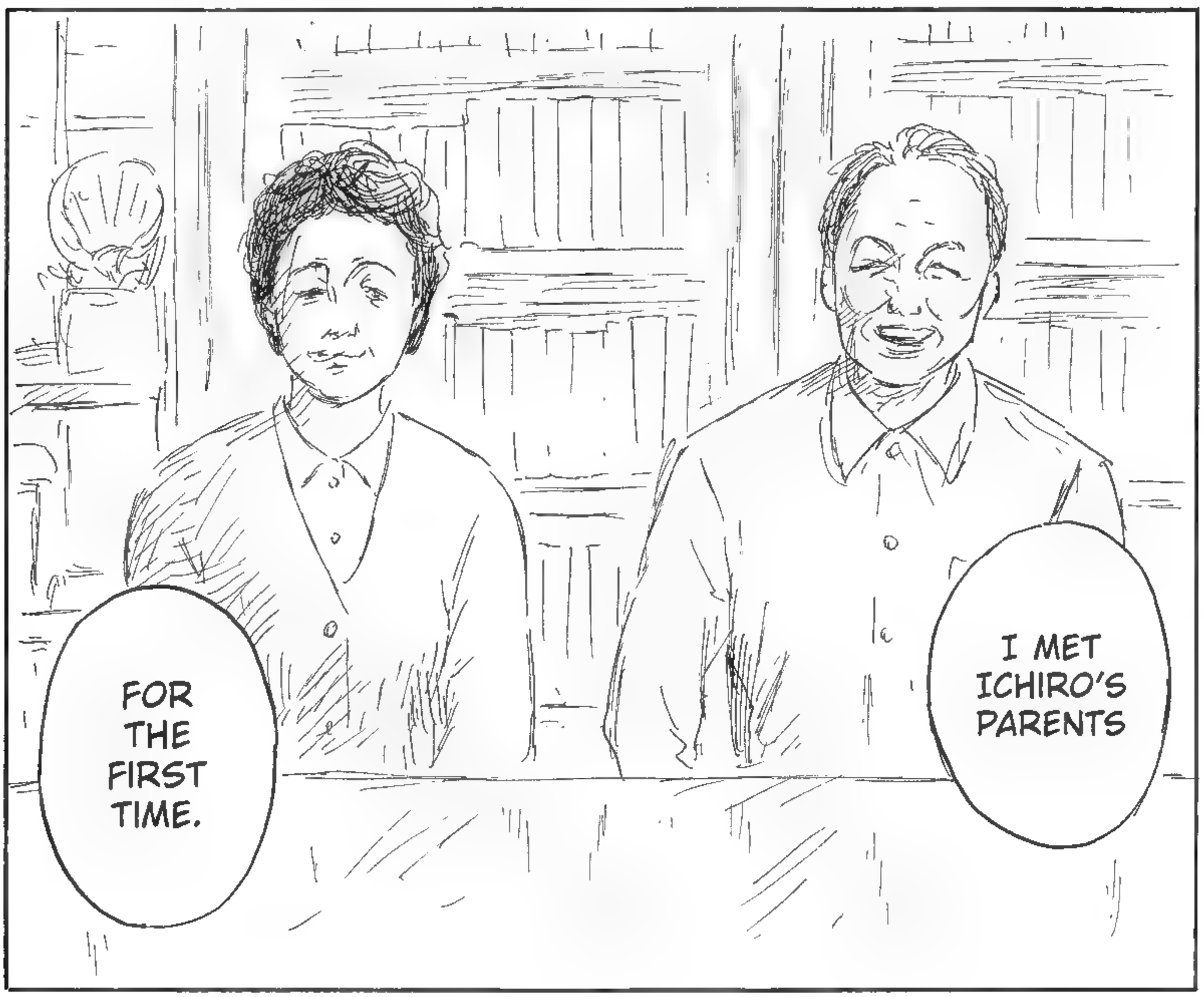
LET'S GET MARRIED,

HE SAID.

I SAID YES,
SO


AND GAVE UP.




FOR THE FIRST TIME.
I MET ICHIRO'S PARENTS

AND WAS READY TO TAKE OVER THE BUSINESS.

HIS FATHER WAS OVER-JOYED

THAT HE'D COME BACK

SEEMED SOMEHOW RELIEVED.

ICHIRO HIMSELF

...THEN...

I'M ICHIRO'S SISTER!

OH MY, IT'S SOOO GOOD TO MEET YOU!

IT... REALLY TOOK ME BY SURPRISE.

WHEN HIS SISTER BUSTLED IN,

WHO JUST KEPT ON TALKING ALL THE TIME.

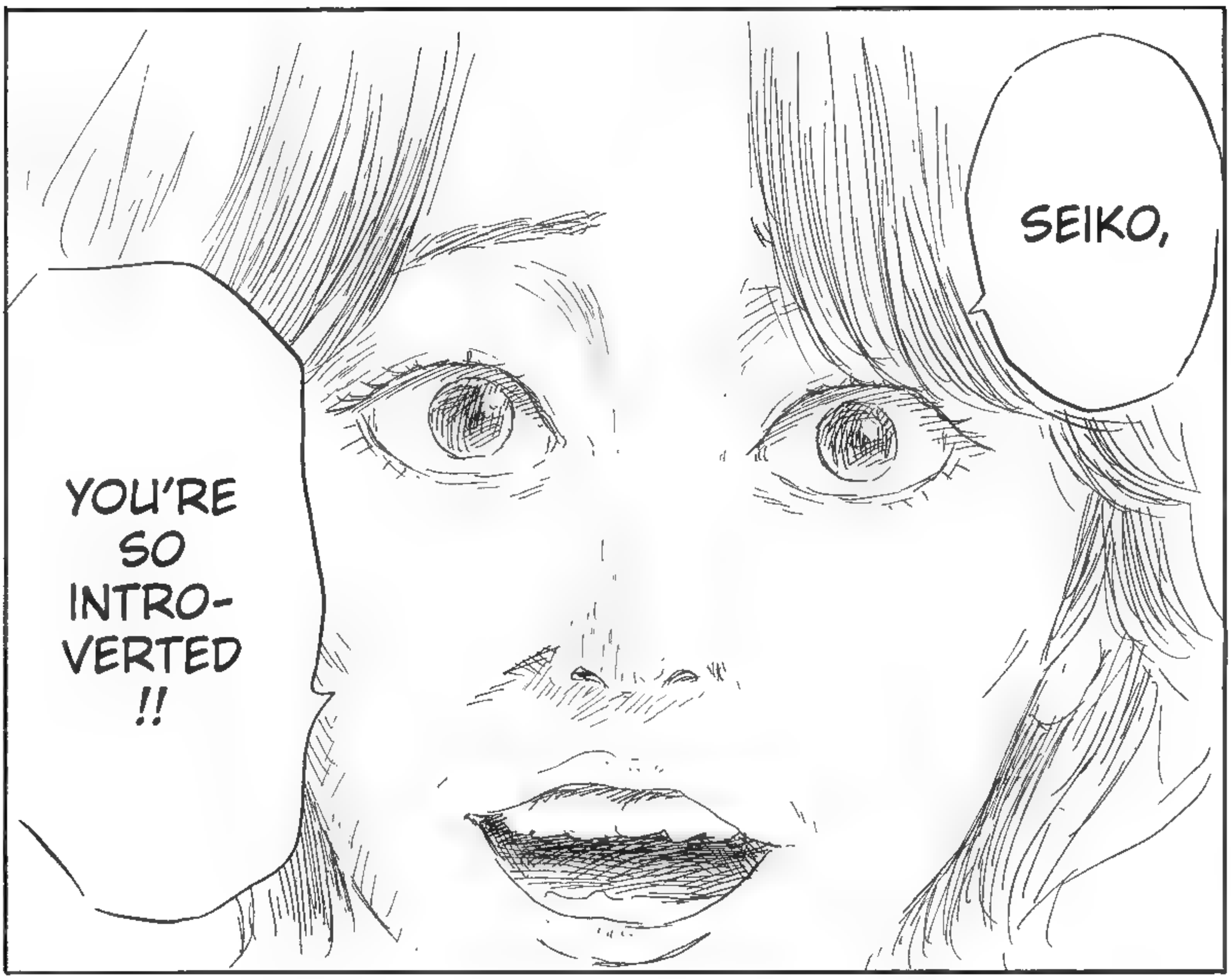
I'D NEVER MET SOMEONE LIKE THAT,

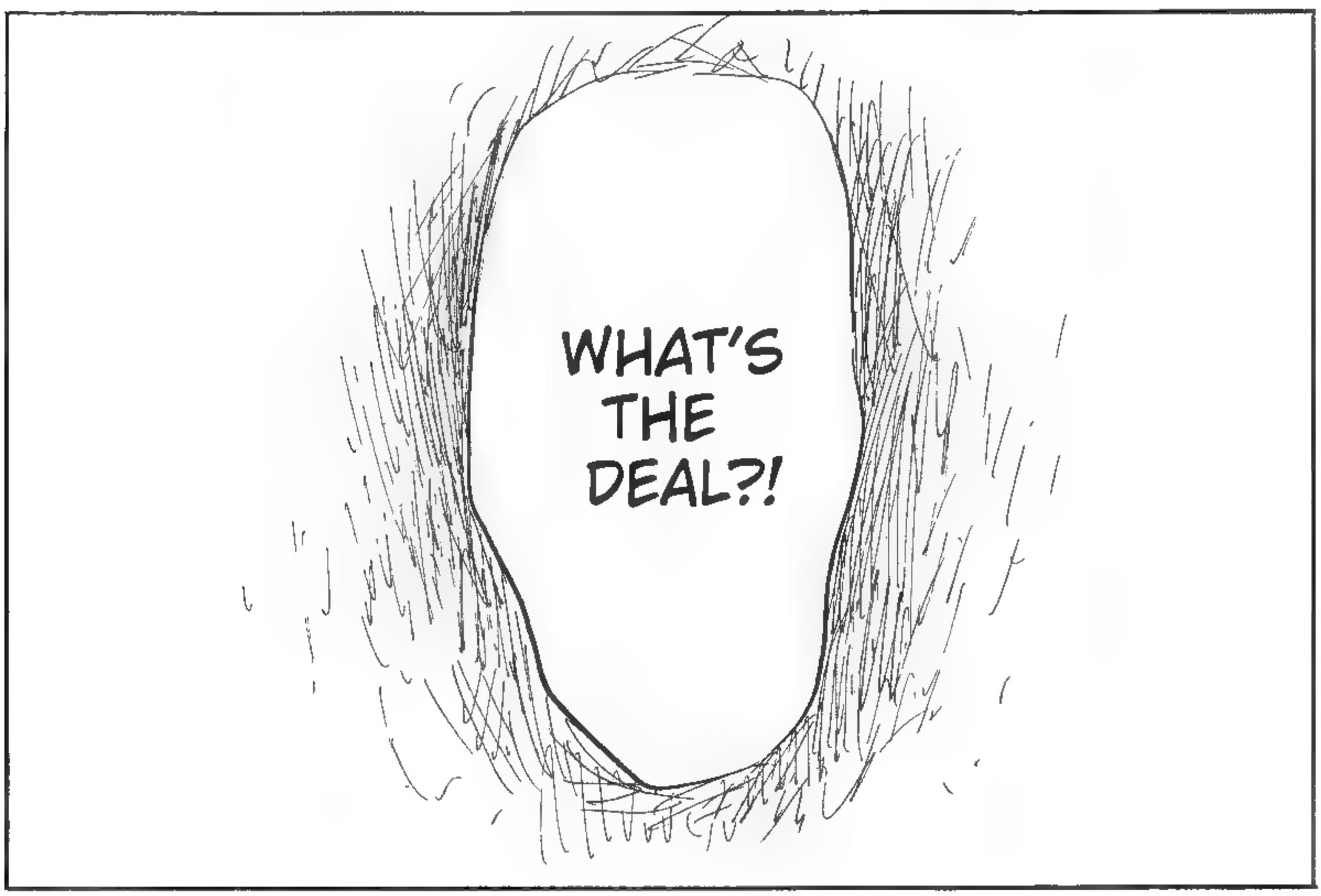
JUST SMILED NON-COMMIT-TALLY.

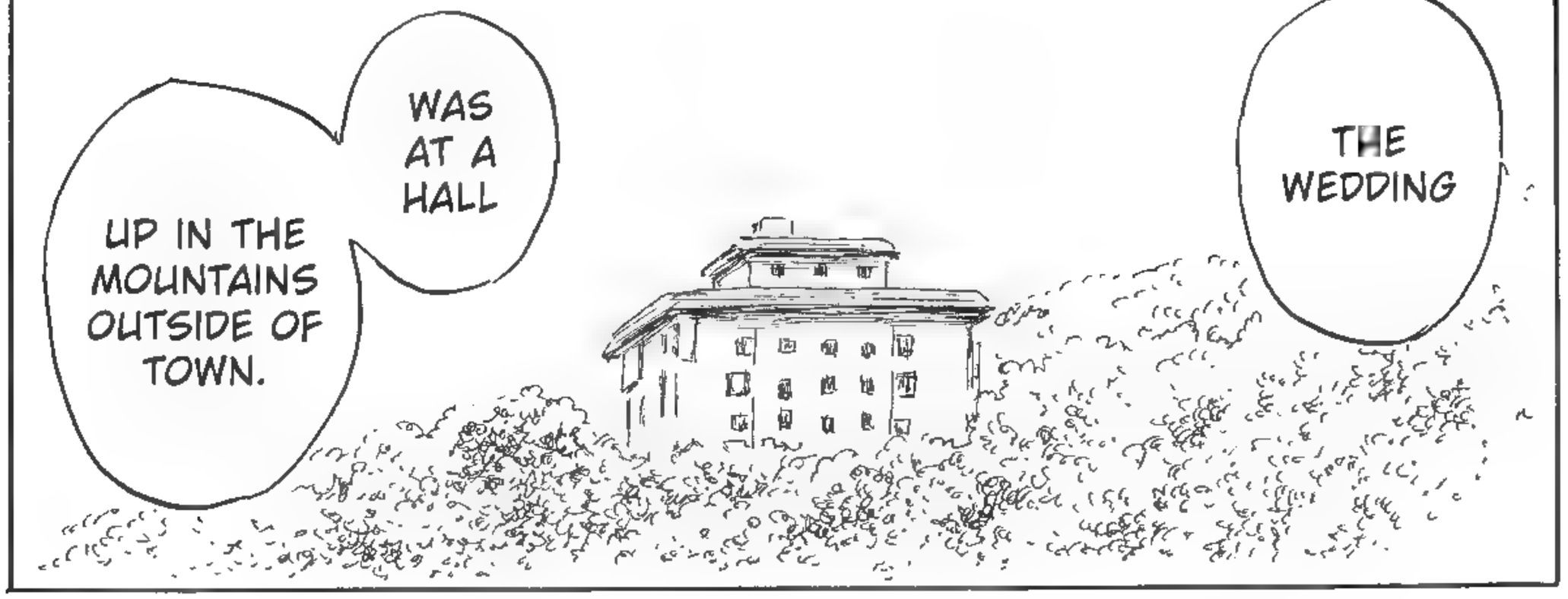
ICHIRO

RIGHT THERE, THE FIRST TIME WE MET,

THEN SHE SAID TO ME,


YOU'RE SO INTRO-VERTED !!
SEIKO,


WHAT'S THE DEAL?!


UP IN THE MOUNTAINS OUTSIDE OF TOWN.
WAS AT A HALL
THE WEDDING

"YOU LOOK PRETTY,"

HEARING HIM SAY,

I WAS HAPPY.

I THINK

THANK YOU.

YOUR KIMONO IS LOVELY, TOO.

LOOK AT YOU!

YOU SURE LOOK PRETTY!

ICHIRO

AND HIS MOTHER AND FATHER

ALL SEEMED HAPPY...

CONGRATS.

SEIKO.

ICHIRO. I HOPE YOU'LL MAKE OUR SEIKO HAPPY.

SHE'S A GENTLE SOUL.

DO YOUR BEST

TO TAKE CARE OF ICHIRO.

THANK YOU...

HEY, SIS.

YOU LOOK GREAT.

SEEMED SO FAR AWAY, SOMEHOW.

ALL OF IT

I THINK

MAY HAVE SEEN THAT.

HIS SISTER

SHE SAW...

HIS SISTER HAD A BABY.

THE YEAR AFTER,

YOU'RE SO CUTE.

SHIGE!

WHEN YOU HAVE A KID, IT CHANGES EVERYTHING.

I TELL YOU,

IT'LL CHANGE THINGS FOR YOU.

WHY DON'T YOU AND ICHIRO HURRY UP AND HAVE ONE, TOO?

...IN WHAT WAY?

REALLY?

NOW THAT THERE'S SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU IN THE WORLD.

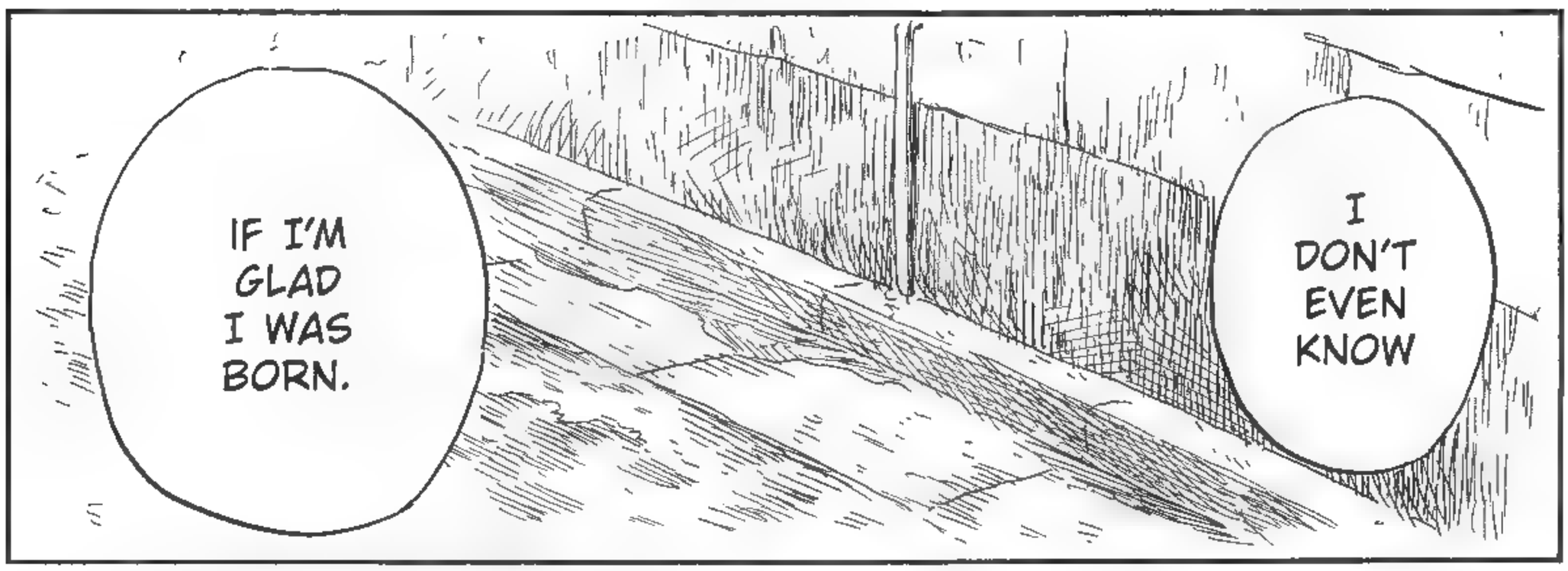
YOU STOP WORRYING ABOUT YOURSELF.

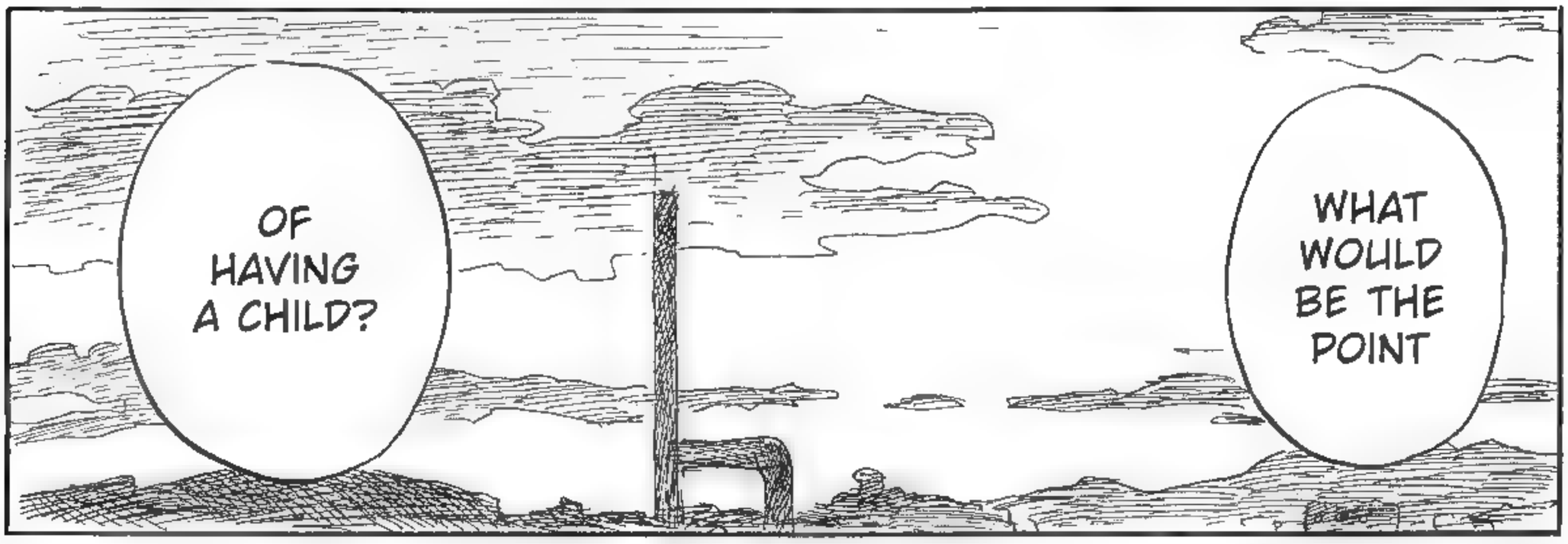
TAKE A REAL LOAD OFF, YOU KNOW?

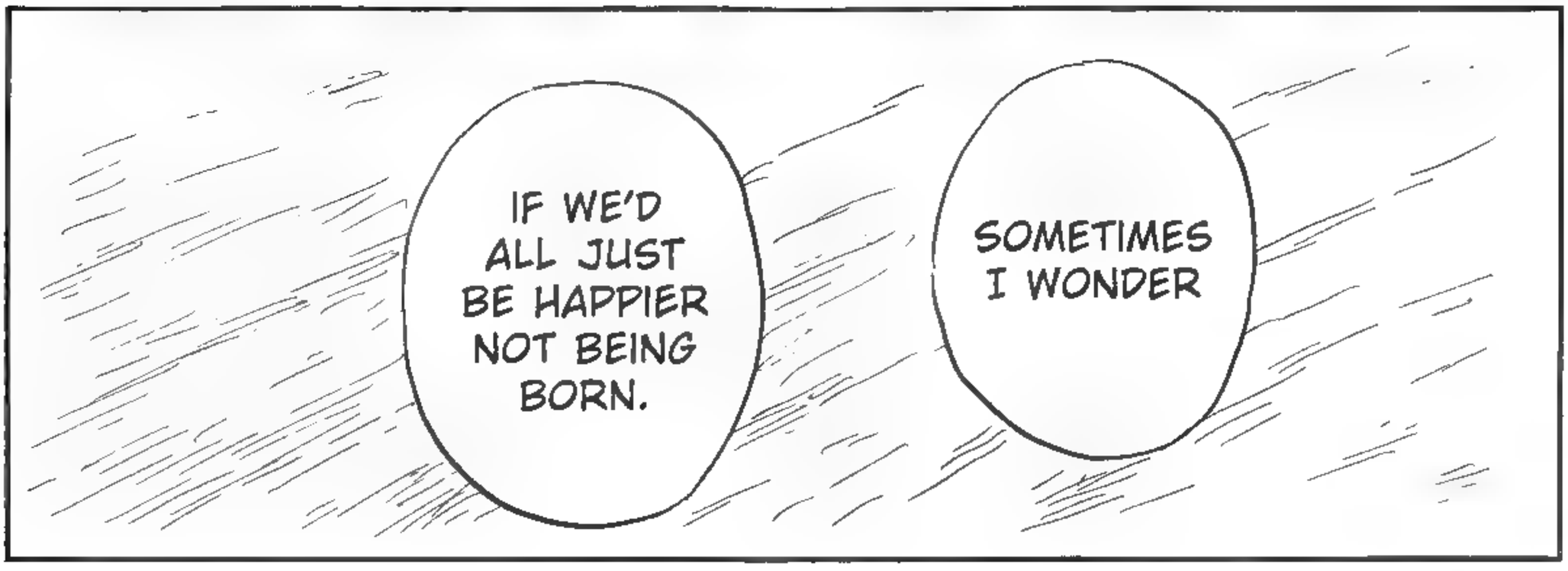
I BET IT WOULD BE GREAT FOR YOU.

Aah.

I CAN'T PICTURE IT.
ME? HAVE A BABY?


IF I'M GLAD I WAS BORN.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW


OF HAVING A CHILD?
WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT


IF WE'D ALL JUST BE HAPPIER NOT BEING BORN.
SOMETIMES I WONDER

THAT IT'LL BE GLAD IT WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD?

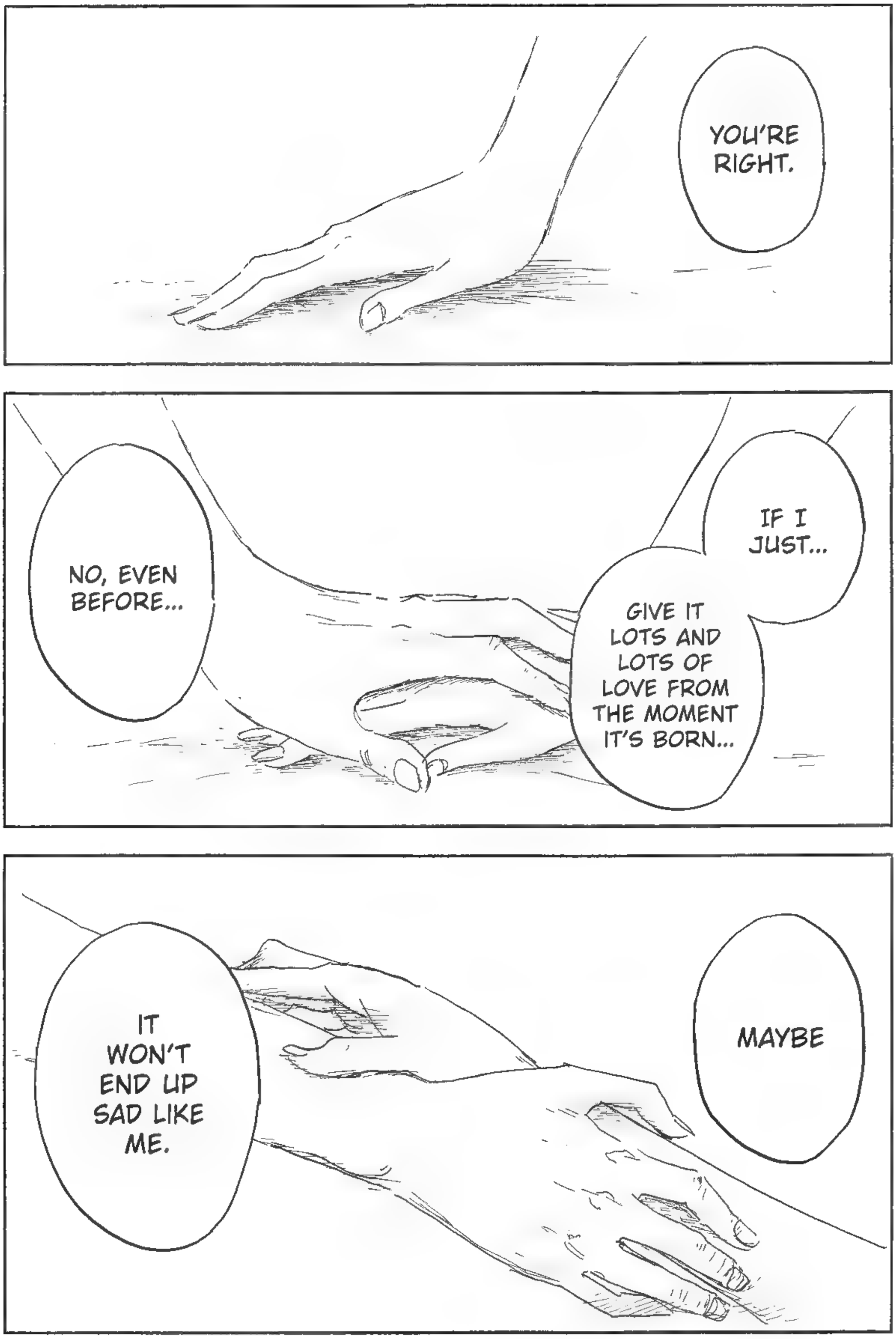
THEN WHY NOT JUST GIVE THE BABY SO MUCH LOVE

I KNOW YOU CAN.

YOU CAN DO IT.

...HUH...

LOVE?


YOU'RE RIGHT.
NO, EVEN BEFORE...
IF I JUST...
GIVE IT LOTS AND LOTS OF LOVE FROM THE MOMENT IT'S BORN...
IT WON'T END UP SAD LIKE ME.
MAYBE

I CAN GIVE IT ALL OF THAT.

EVERYTHING I WANTED.

EVERYTHING I NEVER GOT.

I'LL GIVE IT EVERYTHING.

I COULDN'T GET ANYWHERE,

BUT NOW I HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE.

I CAN START OVER.

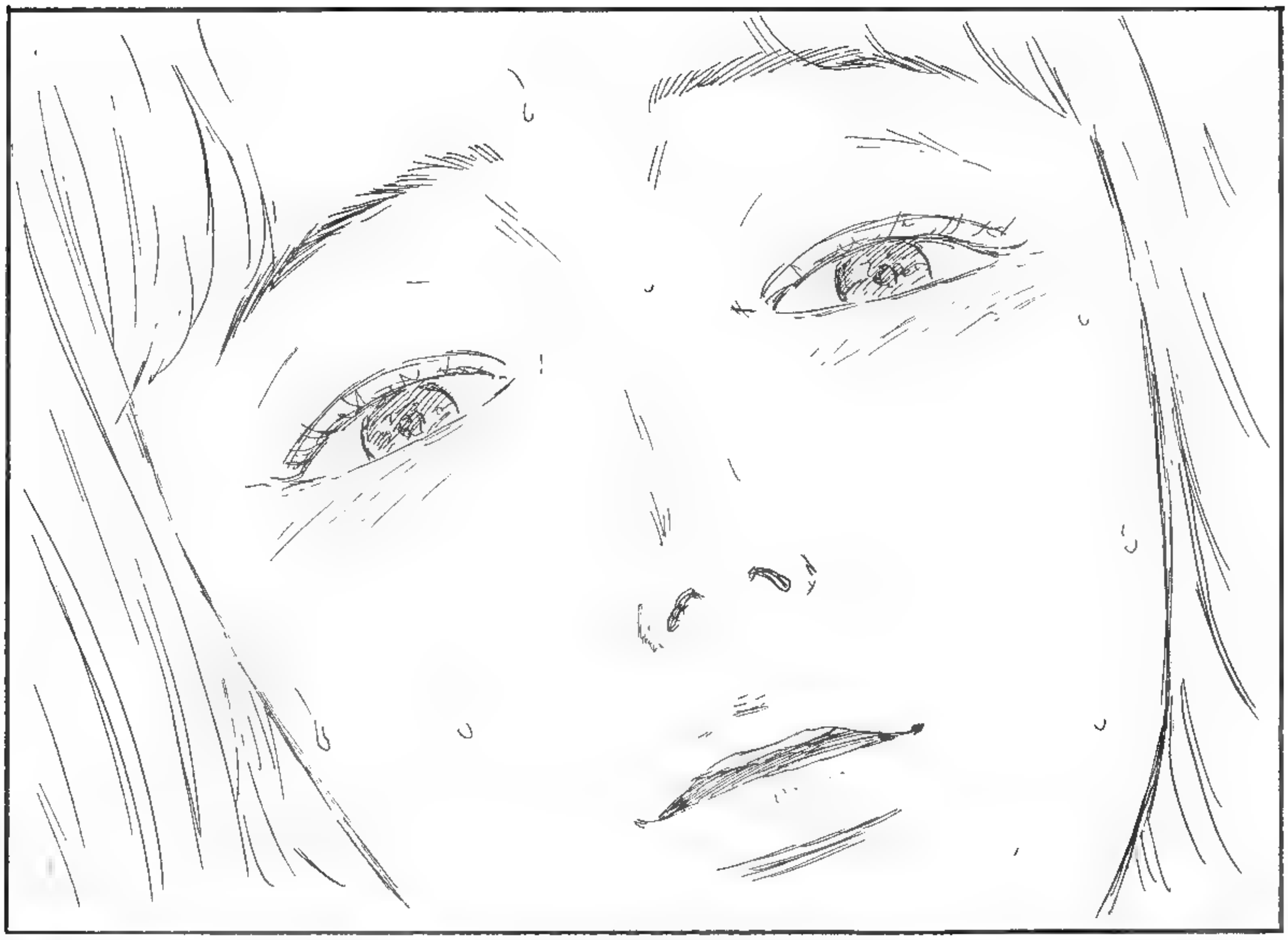
FROM THE BEGINNING.

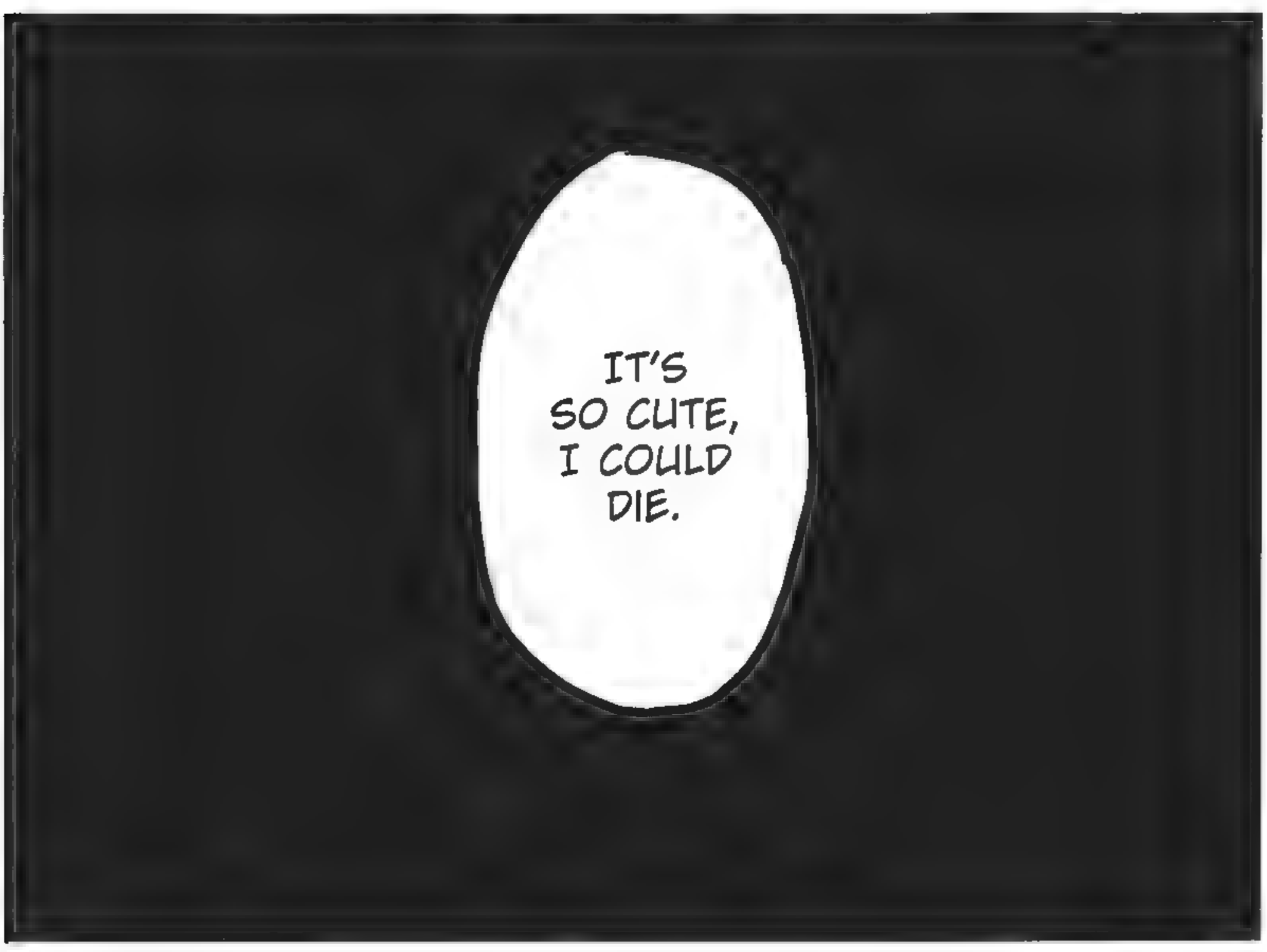
WHEN I FIRST SAW THE BABY'S FACE,

IN THAT MOMENT,

I THOUGHT, NO WAY.

HOW COULD IT BE THIS CUTE?




IT'S
SO CUTE,
I COULD
DIE.

FROM EACH OF OUR NAMES,

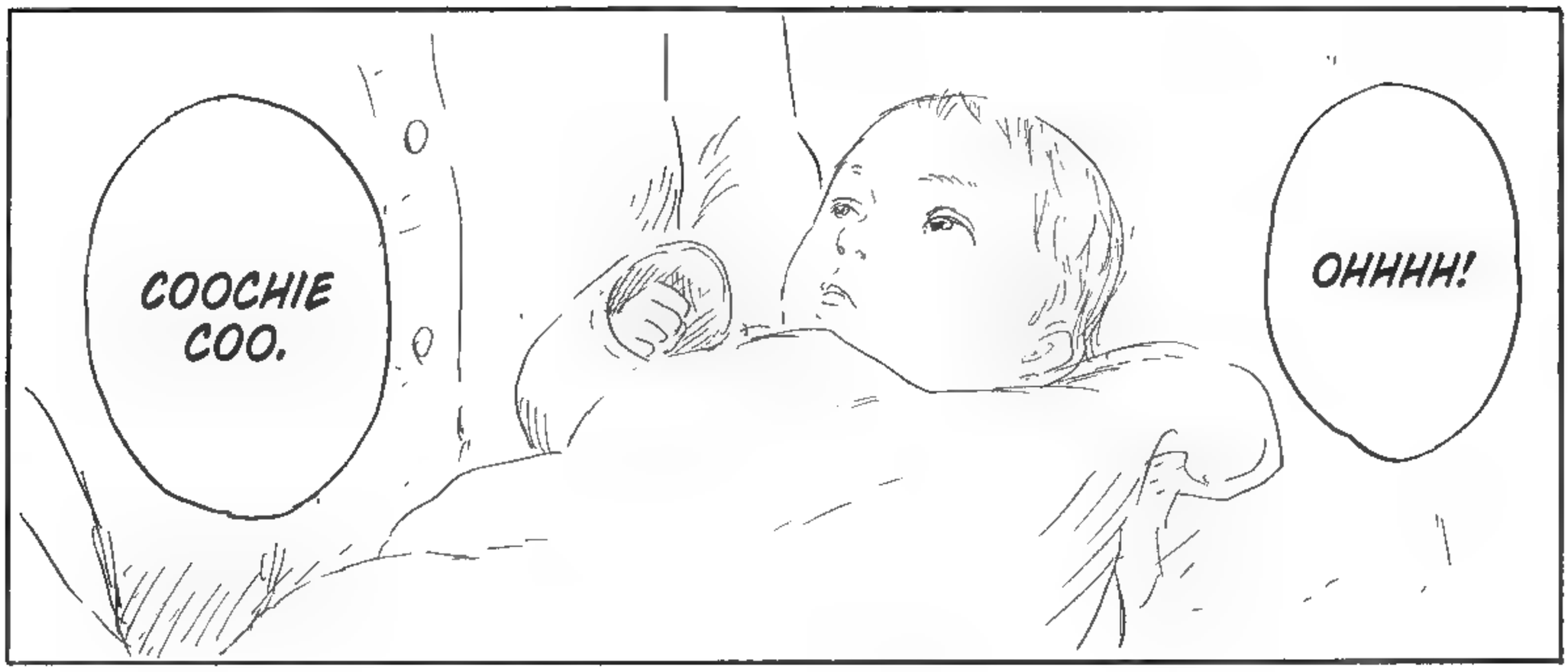
HOW 'BOUT WE TAKE ONE CHARACTER

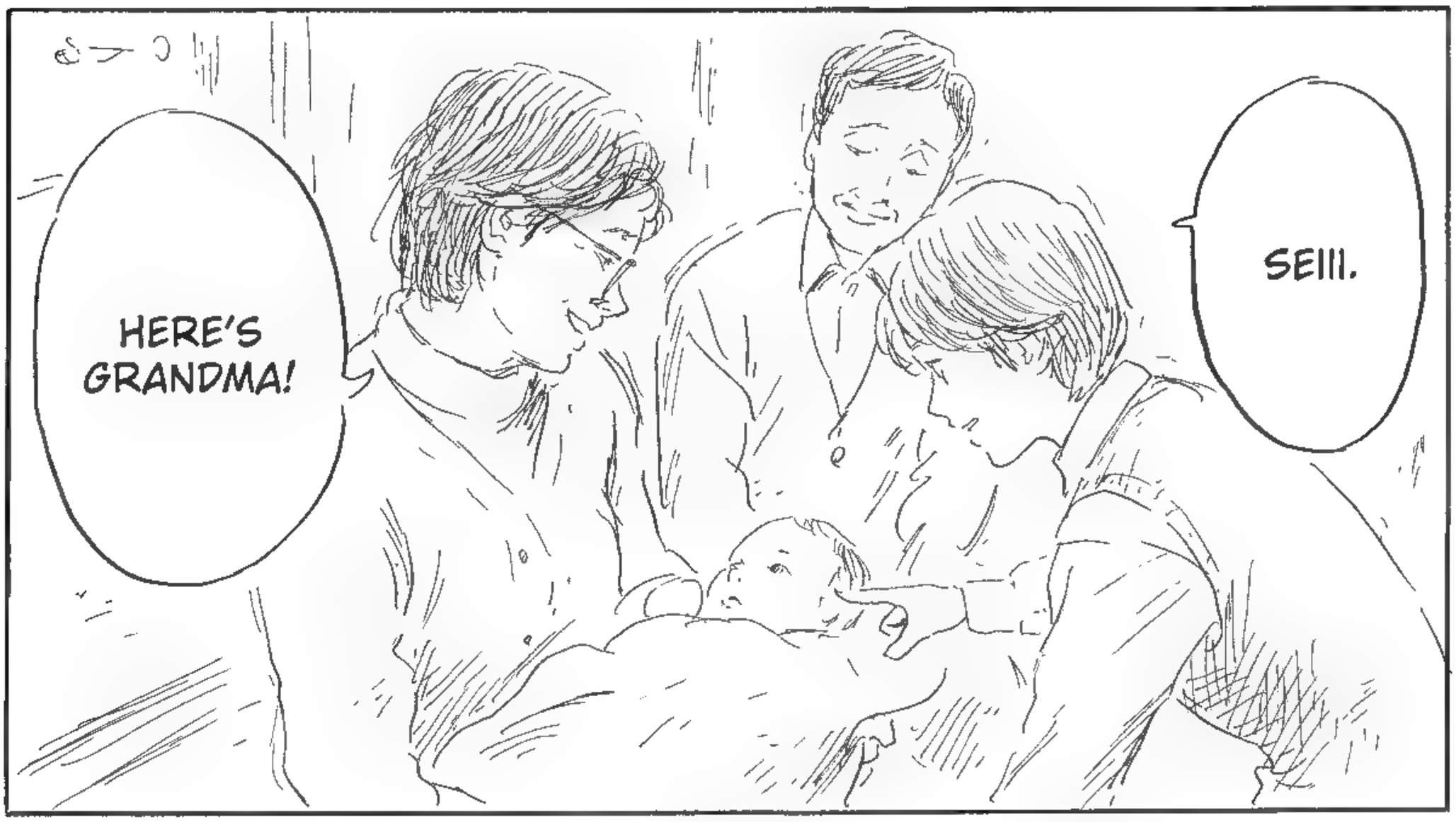
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

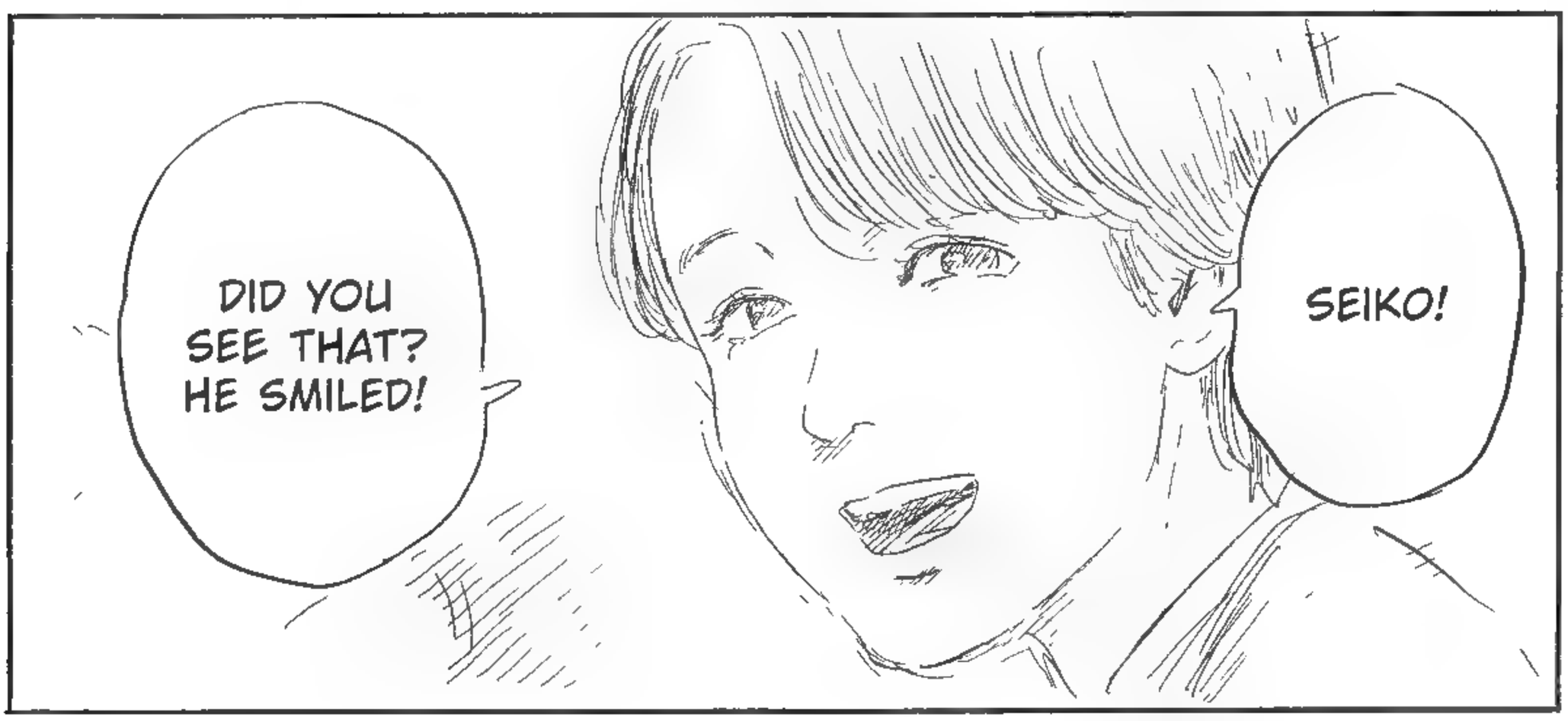
AND CALL HIM SEIICHI?

IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.

SURE.


COOCHIE COO.
OHHHH!


HERE'S GRANDMA!
SEIII.


DID YOU SEE THAT? HE SMILED!
SEIKO!

MM-
HM-
HM

MMM-
HM

MMM
MMM

IT'LL
BE
OKAY.

SEIICHI,

IT'LL
ALL BE
OKAY.

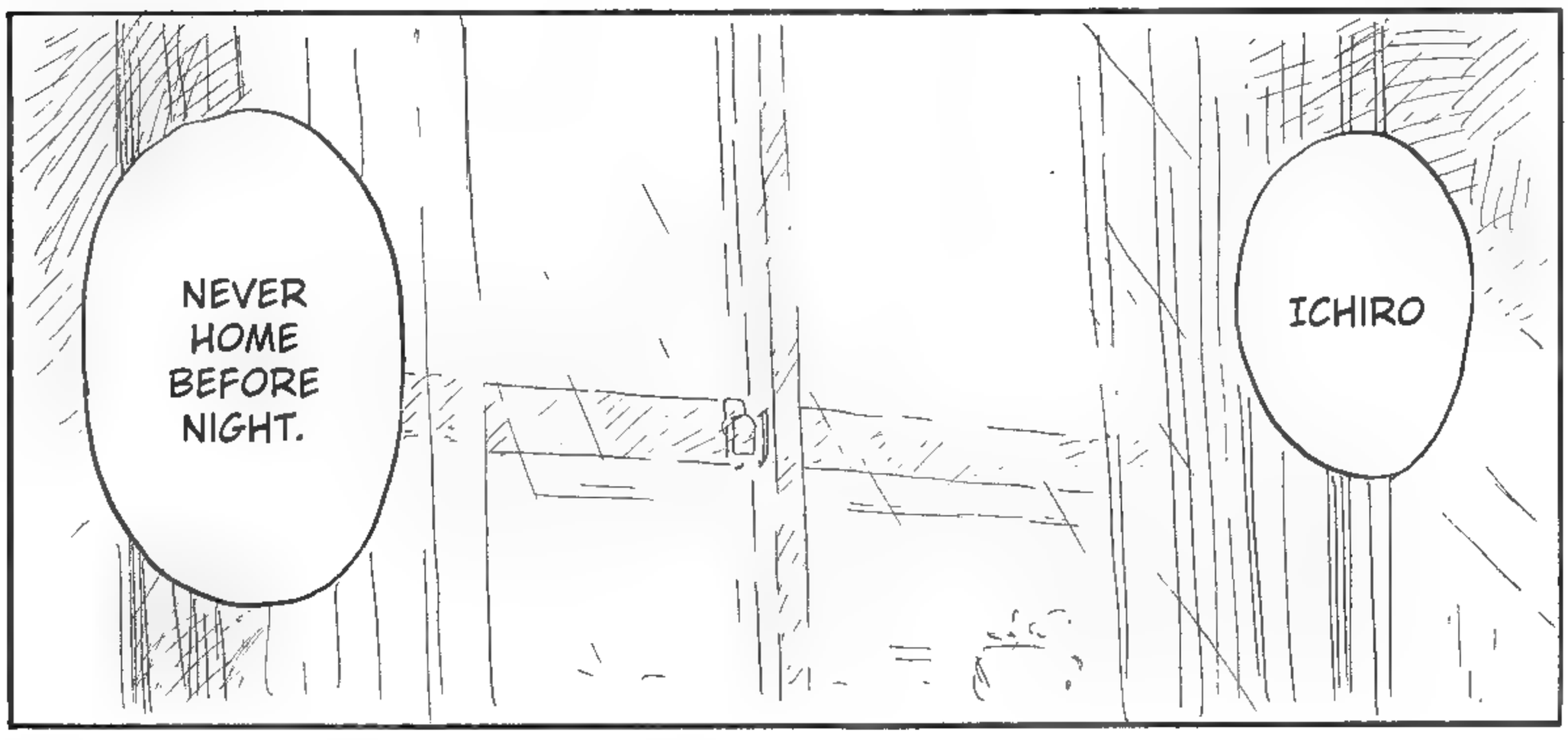
ALL THE LOVE YOU NEED.

I'LL GIVE YOU

SO YOU WON'T BE SAD AND LONELY.

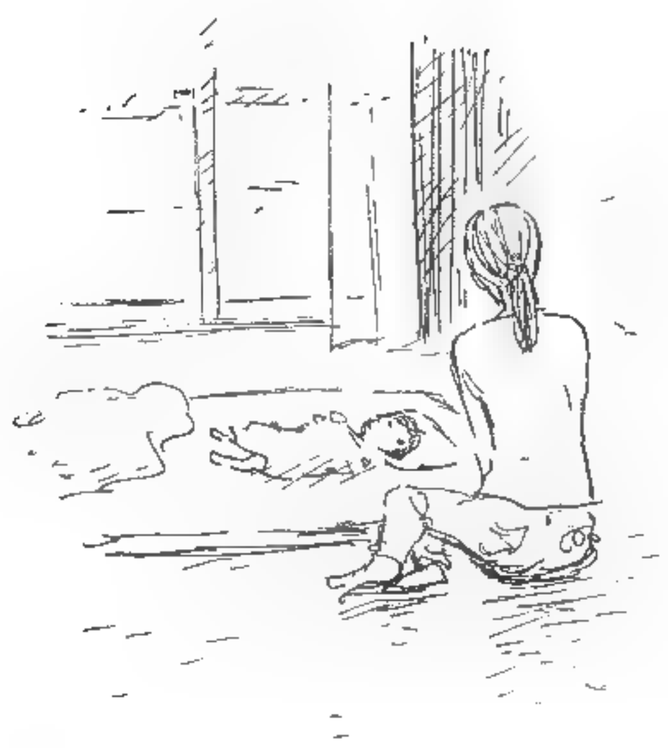
JUST THE TWO OF US.
ALONE WITH MY NEWBORN SEIICHI.

JUST US.
THERE IN THE HOUSE.


NEVER HOME BEFORE NIGHT.
ICHIRO

IS VERY DEAR TO ME.
THIS CHILD

IT'S ALL SO FAR AWAY.



BUT... WHY?

GOO GOO GA GA!

SEIICHI!

I'M HOME!

WATCHING ICHIRO WITH SEIICHI,

BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE ME FEEL ANY LESS LONELY.

I DON'T KNOW WHY,

WILL I FEEL BETTER?

WHEN

THE BABY WASN'T EVEN ONE WHEN IT HAPPENED.

MY SISTER...

BECAME TERRIBLY THIN...

ETSUKO LOST HER APPETITE,

SHE WENT TO LOTS OF DIFFERENT HOSPITALS.

THEY COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY.

FINALLY,

THEY FOUND A TUMOR IN HER BRAIN.

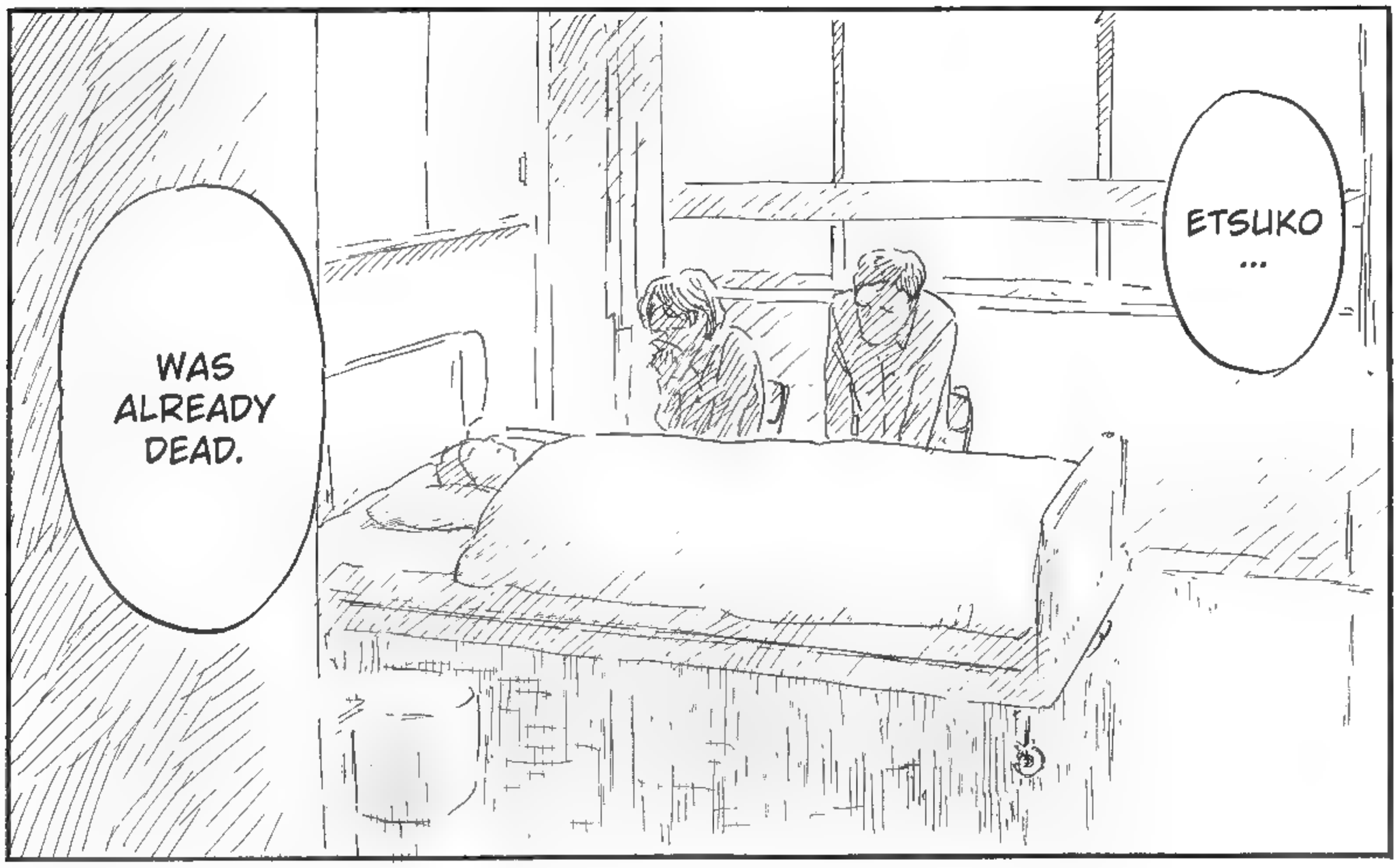
SHE DIED SOON AFTER.

THEY OPERATED,

BUT... IT WAS NO GOOD.

BUT BY THE TIME I ARRIVED,

I GOT A CALL,


WAS ALREADY DEAD.
ETSUKO ...

HER FACE,

SEEING

MY HARDEST TO CRY.

I TRIED

NOT ONE TEAR CAME OUT.

BUT

ALL OF IT.

IT WAS SO FAR AWAY.

WE WERE IN THE CAR,

AFTER THE FUNERAL,

THAT'S WHEN MY MOM TOLD ME:

ON THE WAY TO THE CREMATORY.

YOU SUCKED IT ALL UP.

SEIKO,

ALL OF ETSUKO'S HAPPINESS.

YOU SUCKED UP

DIDN'T THINK ANYTHING OF IT.

I

I'D ALREADY KILLED MY FAMILY.

SHE WAS RIGHT.

INSIDE MYSELF.

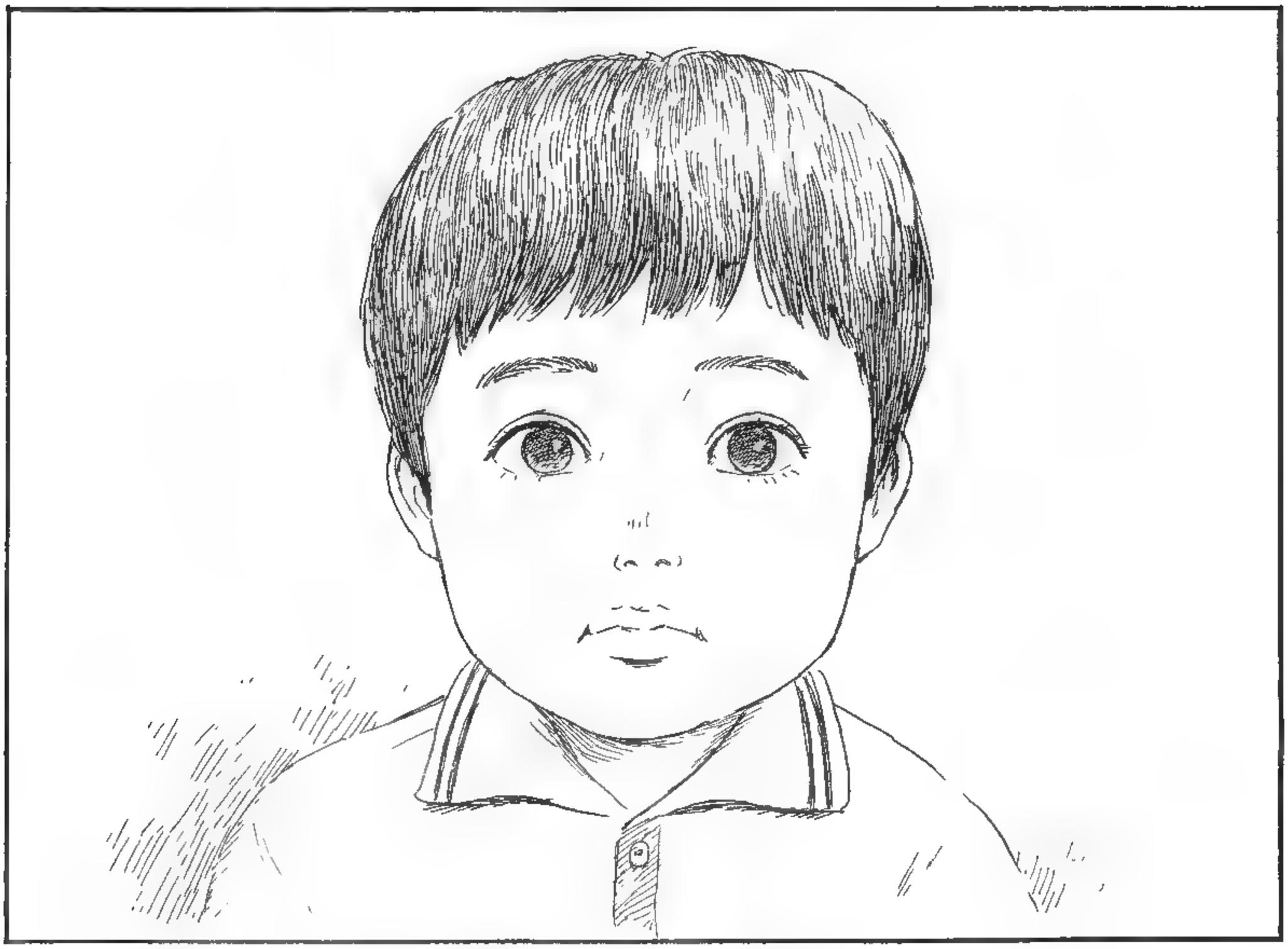
THE REASON EVERYTHING FELT SO FAR AWAY

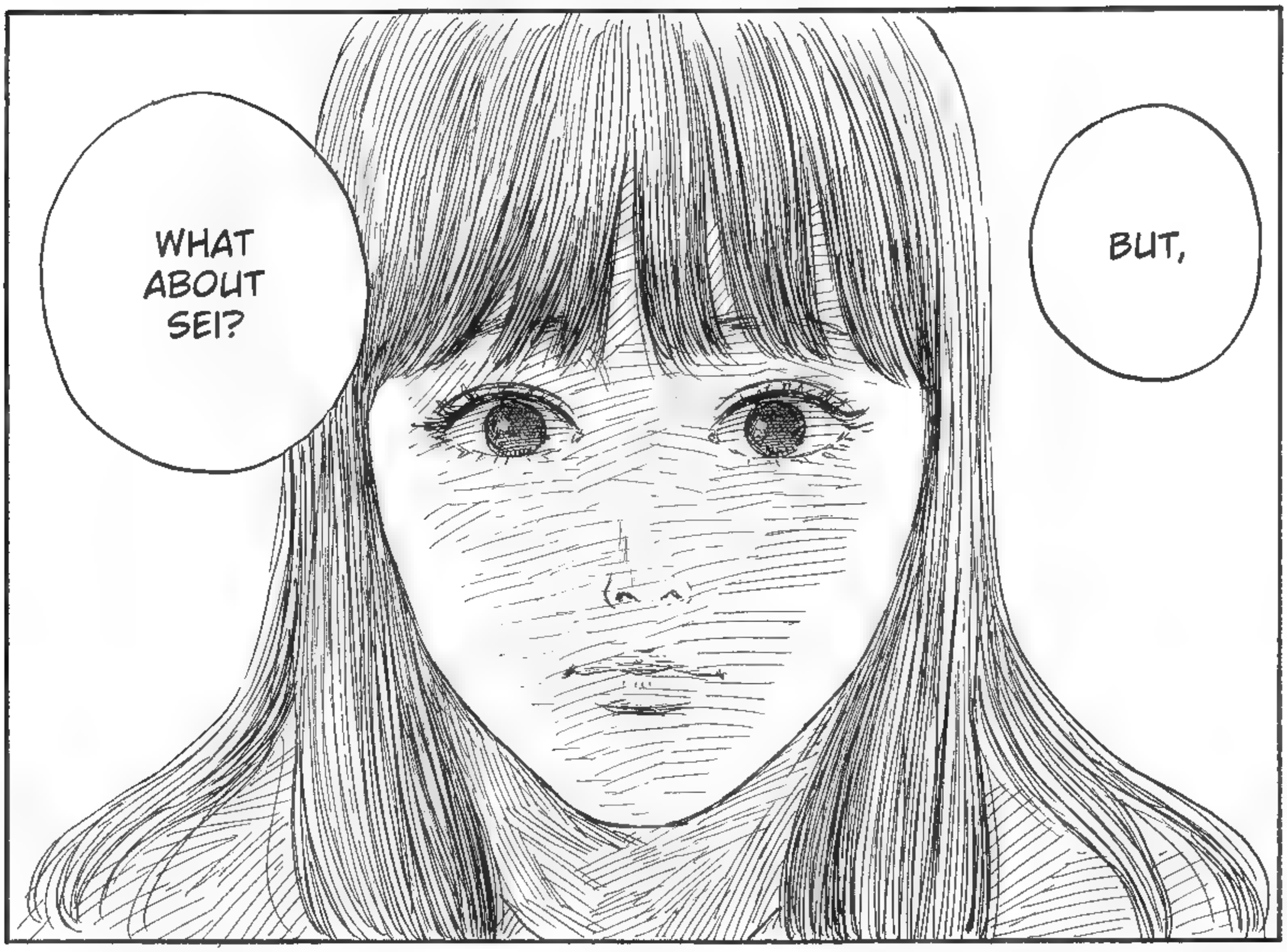
WAS THAT INSIDE ME,

EVERYONE WAS DEAD.

BE EXPECTED TO CRY?

SO HOW COULD I




WHAT ABOUT SEI?
BUT,

SHE'LL BE

WATCHING OVER SEIICHI.

YOU'VE GOT TO LIVE ON.

IT'S WHAT ETSUKO WOULD HAVE WANTED.

MM-HMM.

IT'S LIKE THIS.

SEI,

AH.

OHH,

WOWWW!

CLONK

YOU'RE SO SMART,

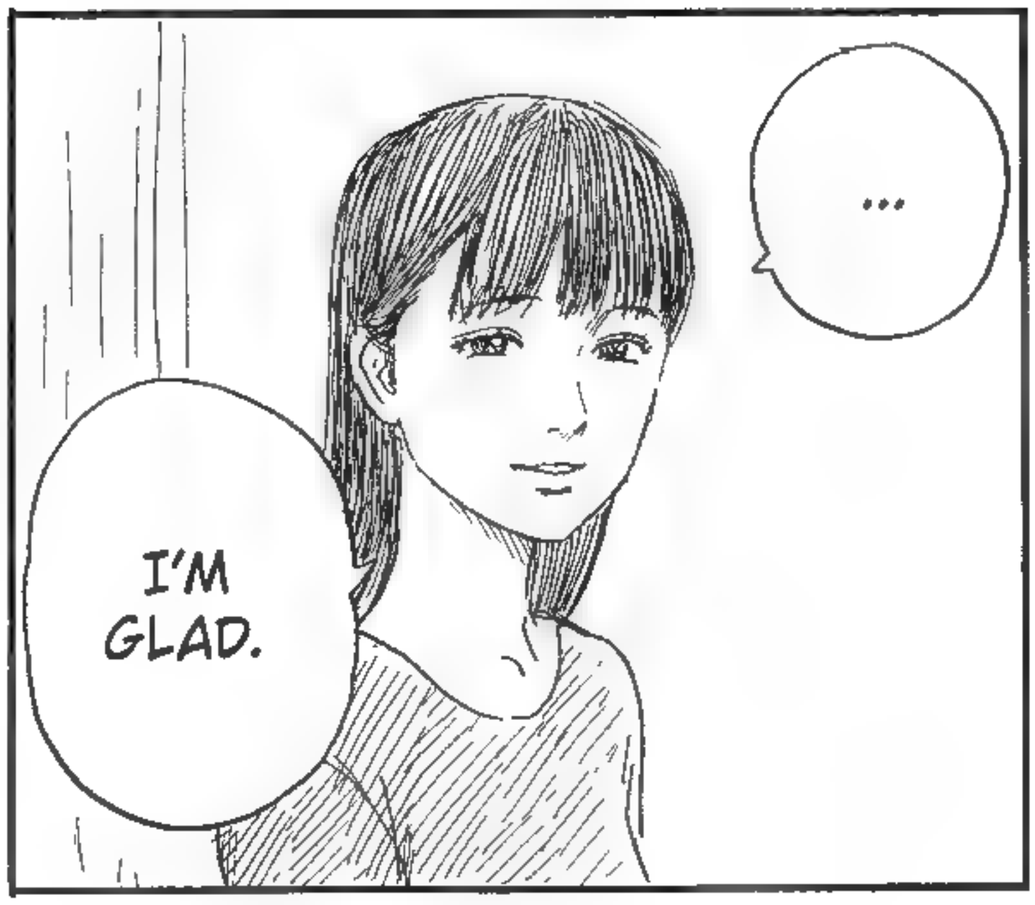
SEI!

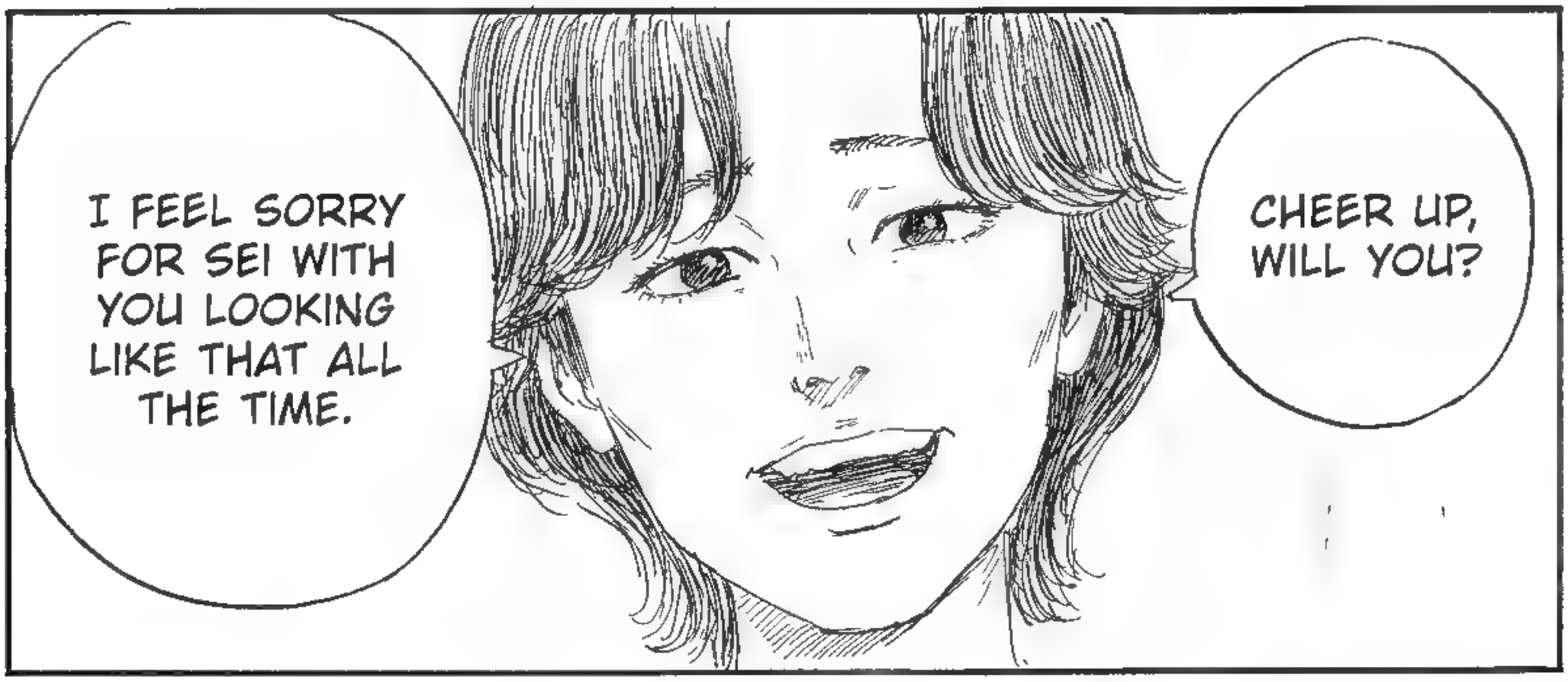
SHIGERU

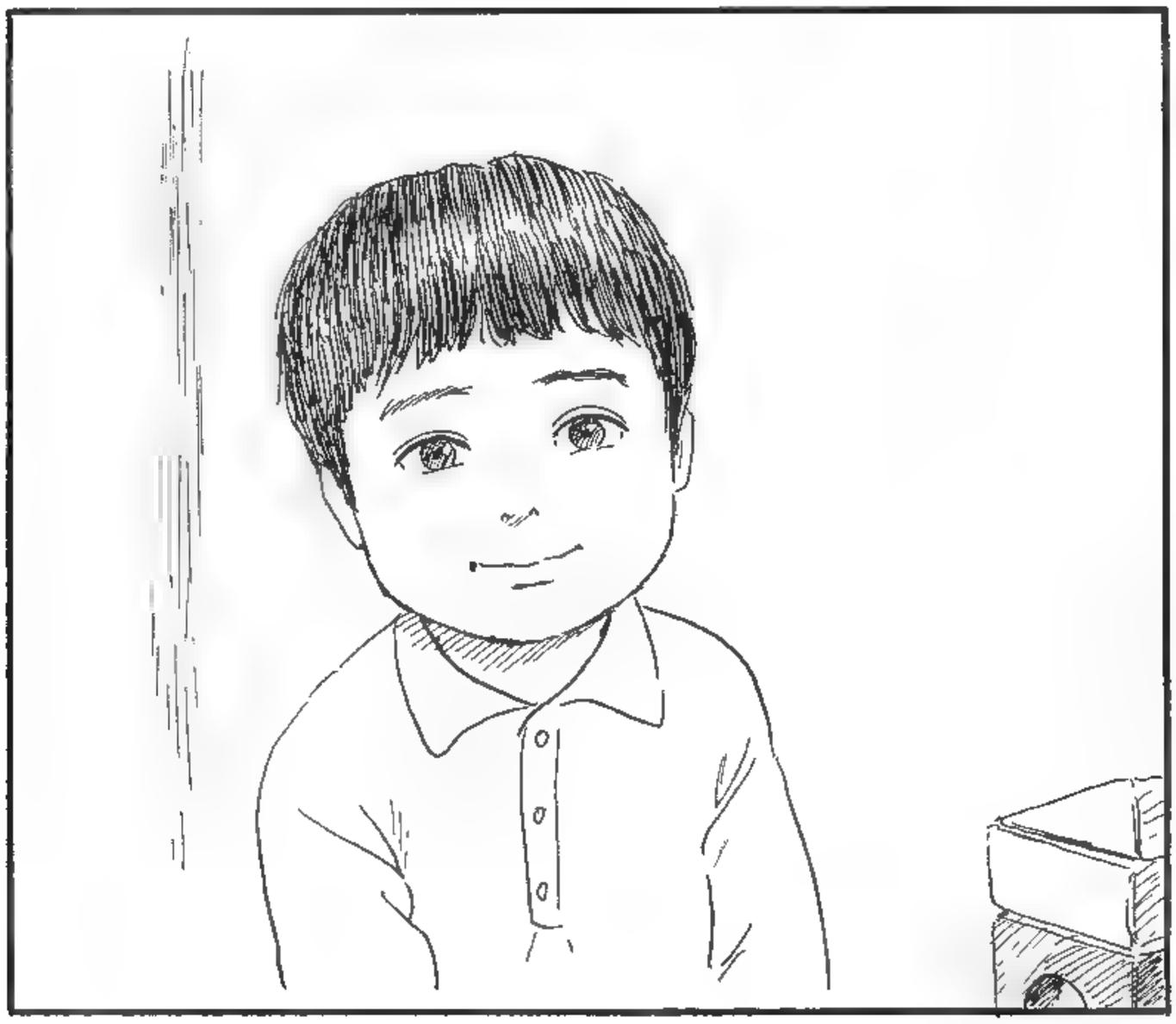
REALLY SEEMS TO LIKE HIM.

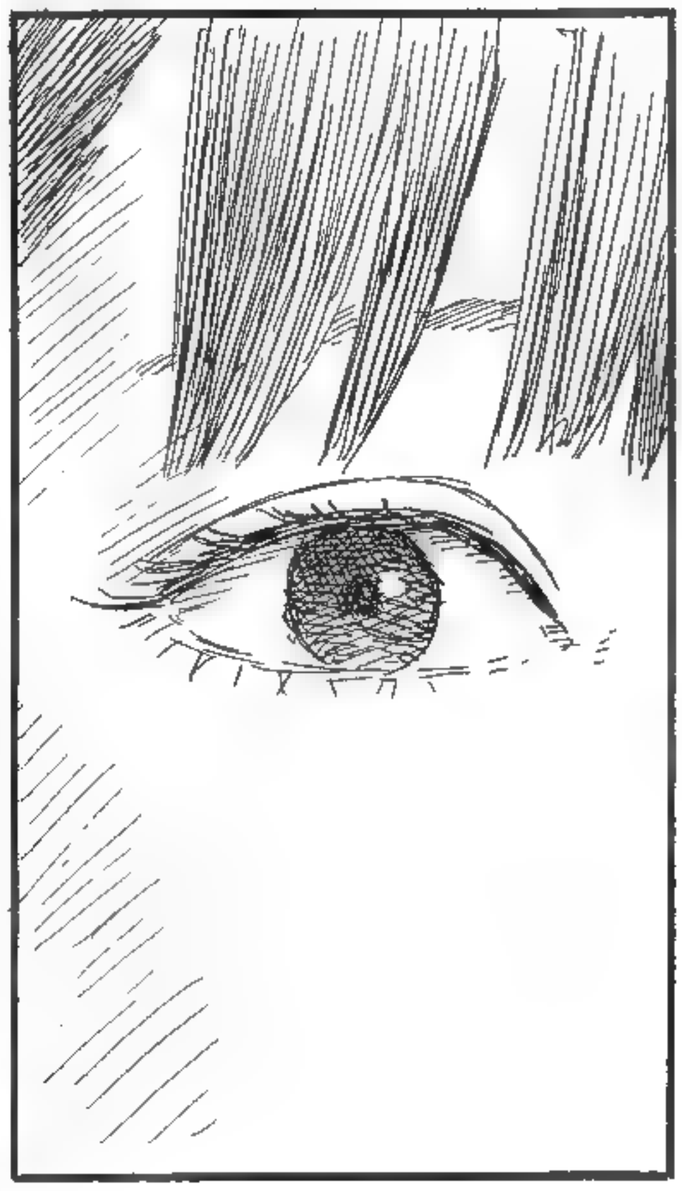
HEY, SEIKO.

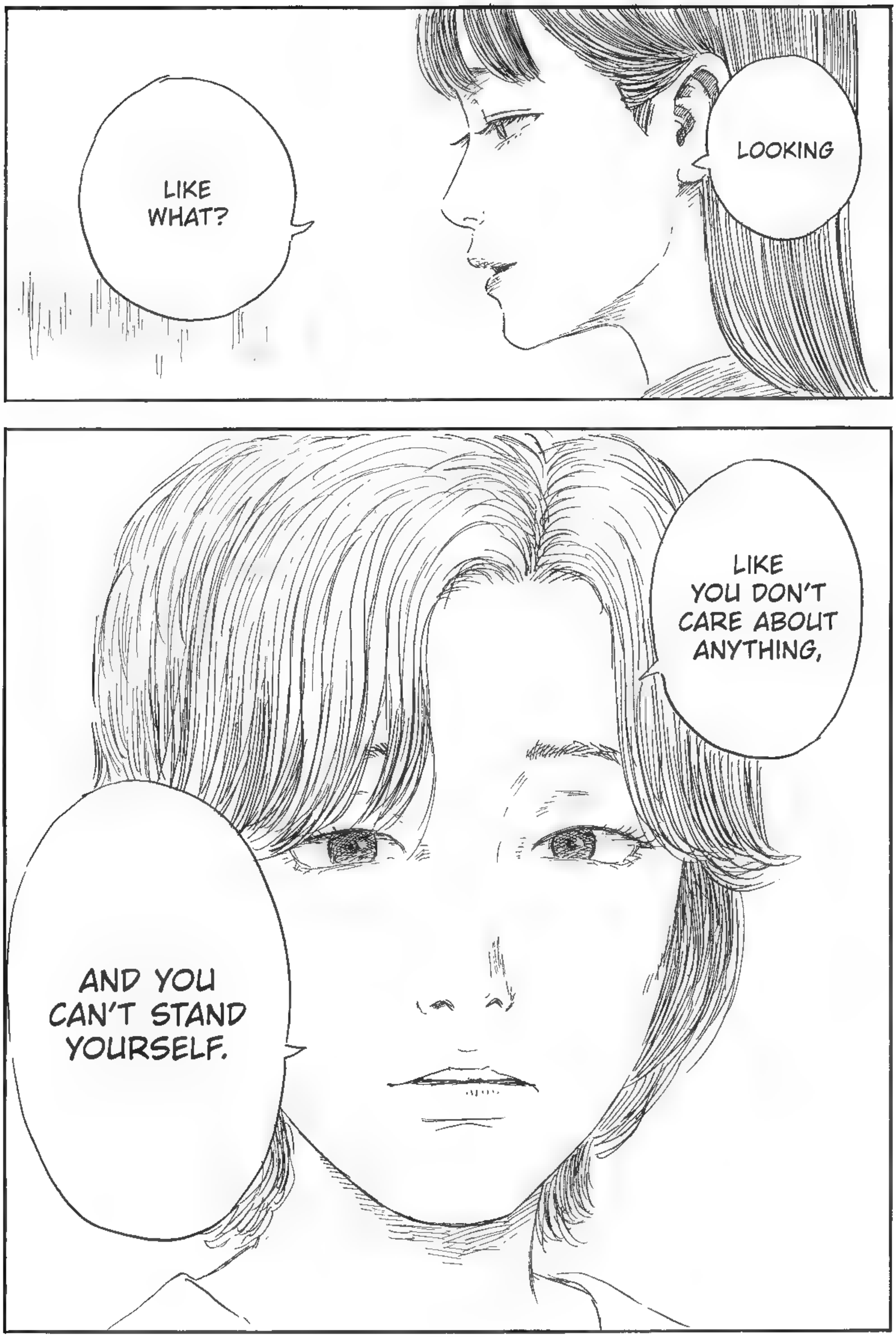
THANKS FOR BRINGING SEI OVER.


...
I'M GLAD.


I FEEL SORRY FOR SEI WITH YOU LOOKING LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME.
CHEER UP, WILL YOU?






LIKE WHAT?
LOOKING
LIKE YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING,
AND YOU CAN'T STAND YOURSELF.

ABOUT YOU.

I DON'T LIKE THAT

I'M SORRY.

...

HUH?

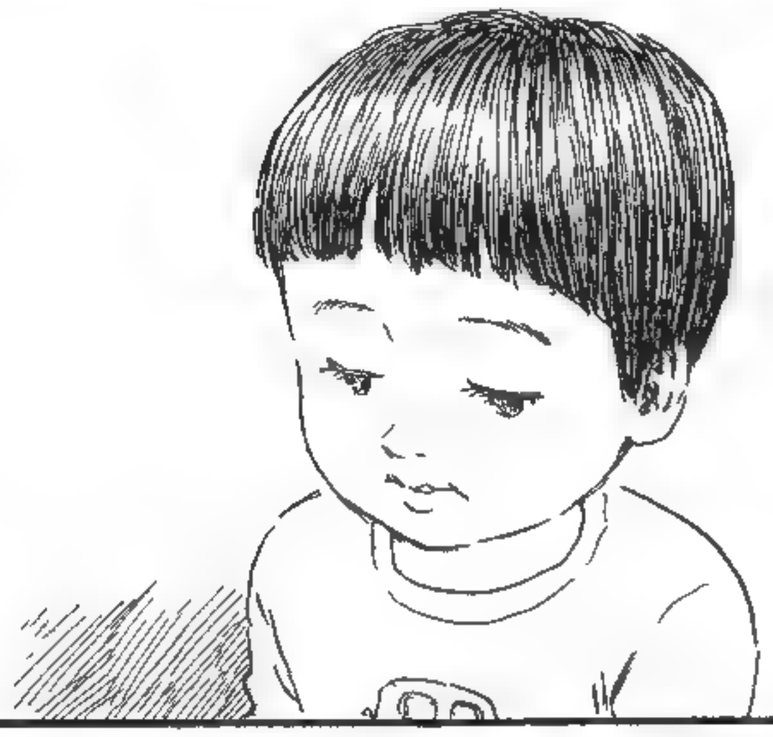
YOU REALLY ARE SOMETHING, SEIKO.

NOW YOU'RE APOLOGIZING ?

AHAHA...

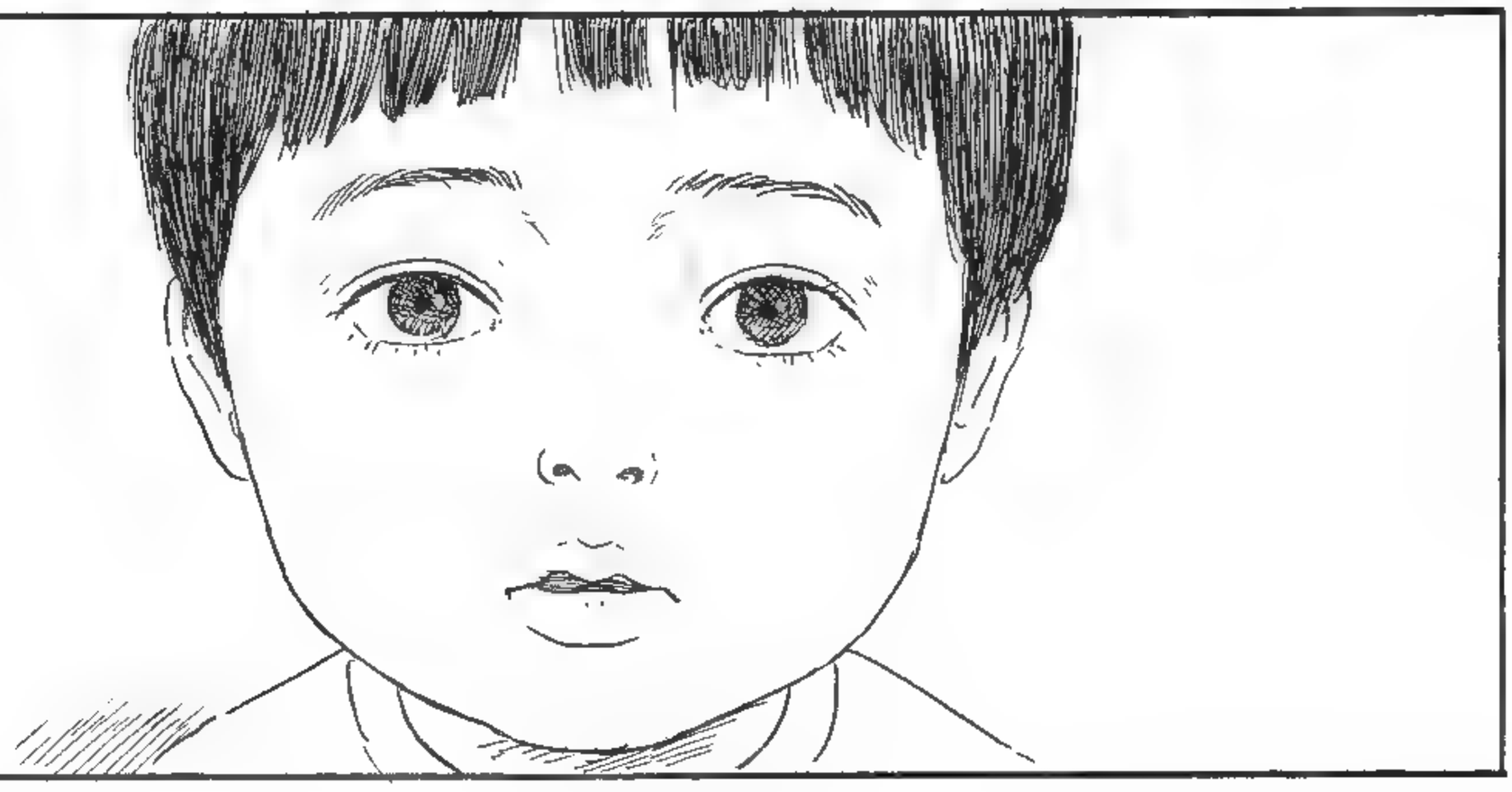
...

HEY, SEI.



COME HERE.

SEI.



RIGHT BESIDE MOMMY.

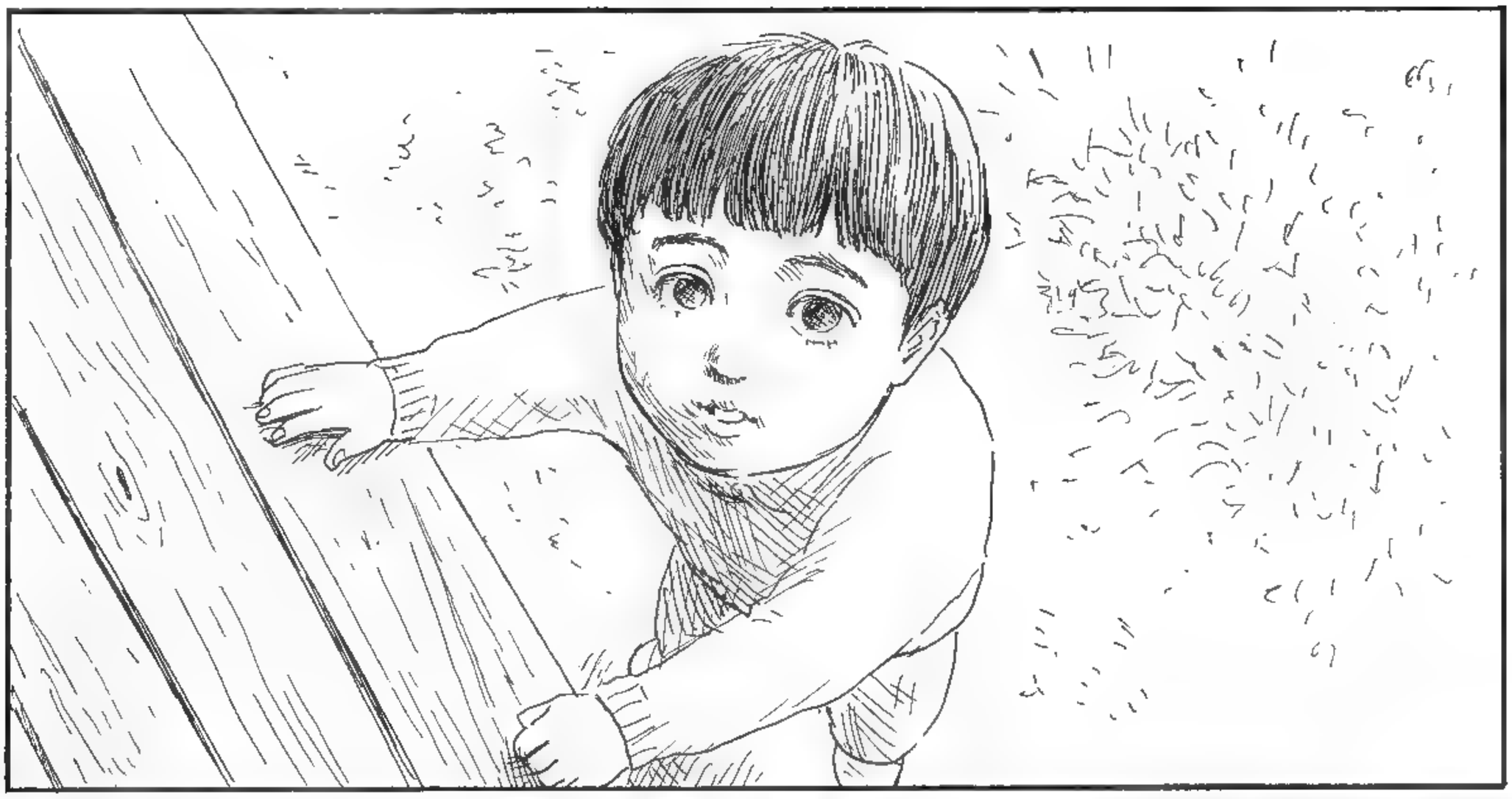
COME CLOSER.

FOREVER.

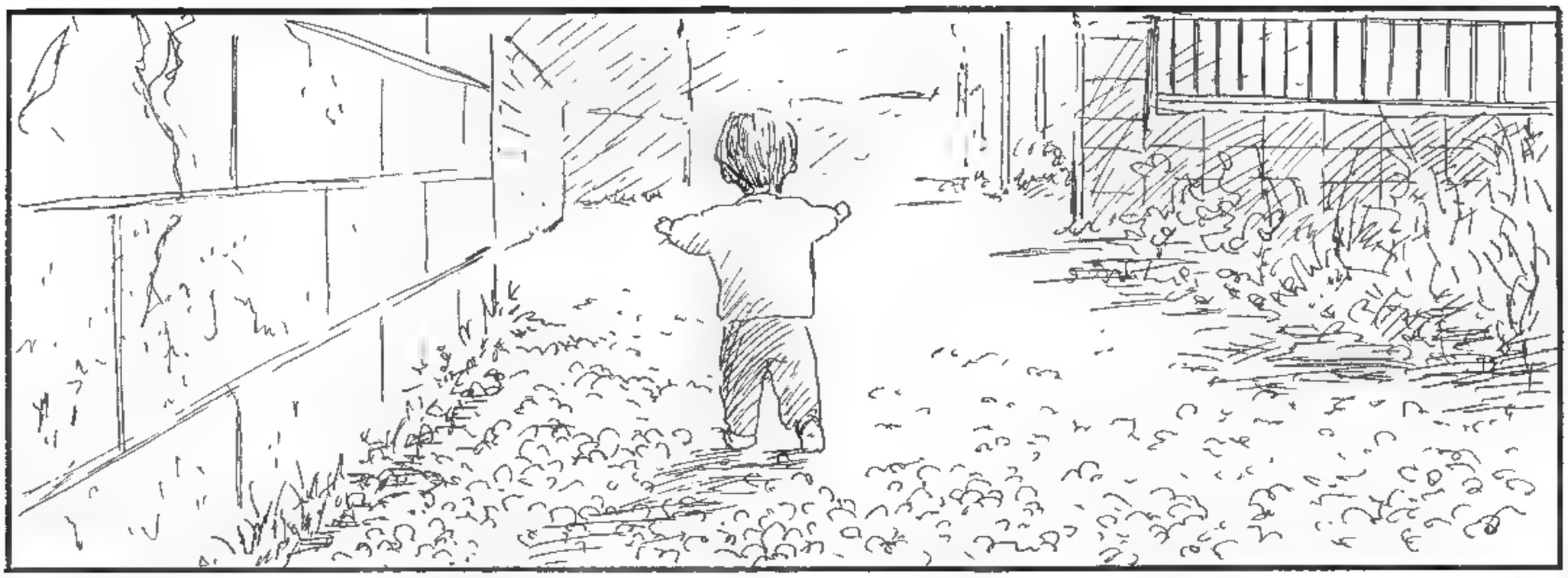
LET ME HOLD YOU

THAT YOU CAN'T SEE MINE.
DIG YOUR FACE IN SO DEEP

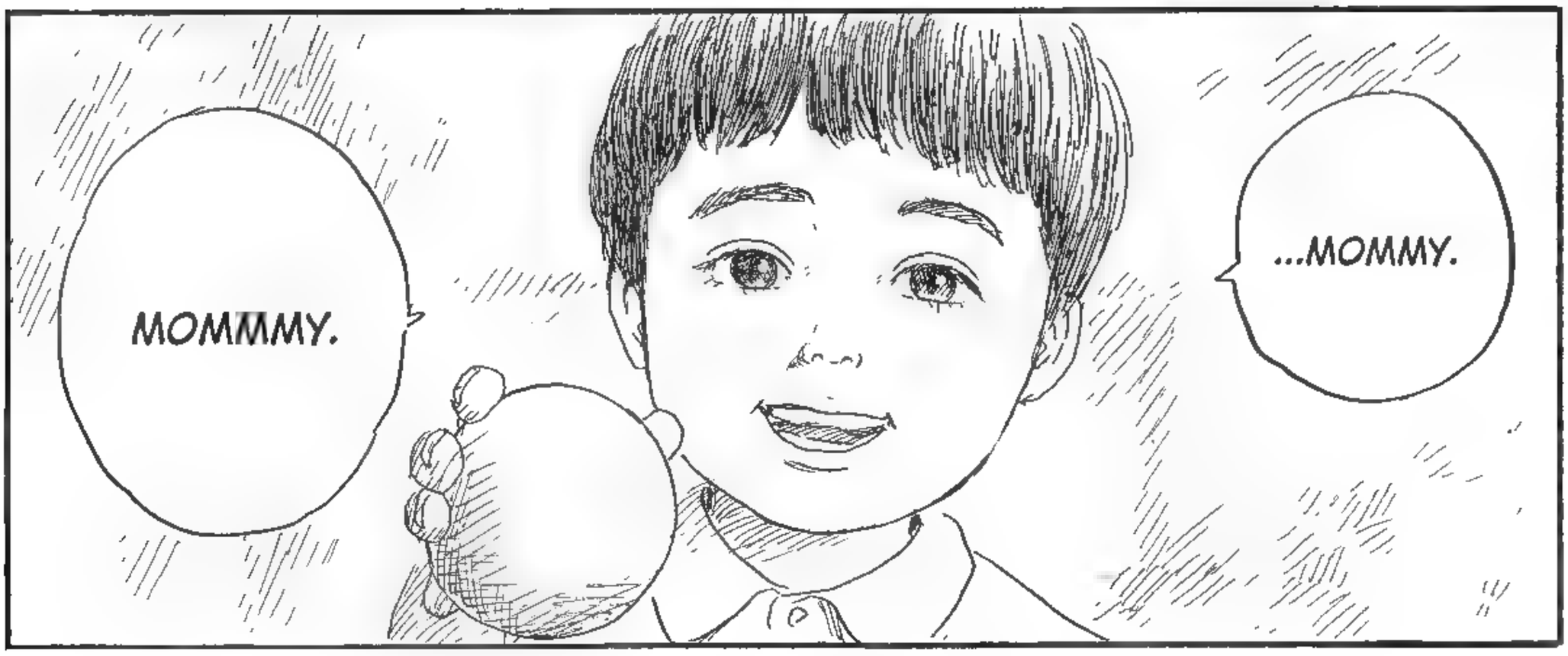
MORE... MORE.

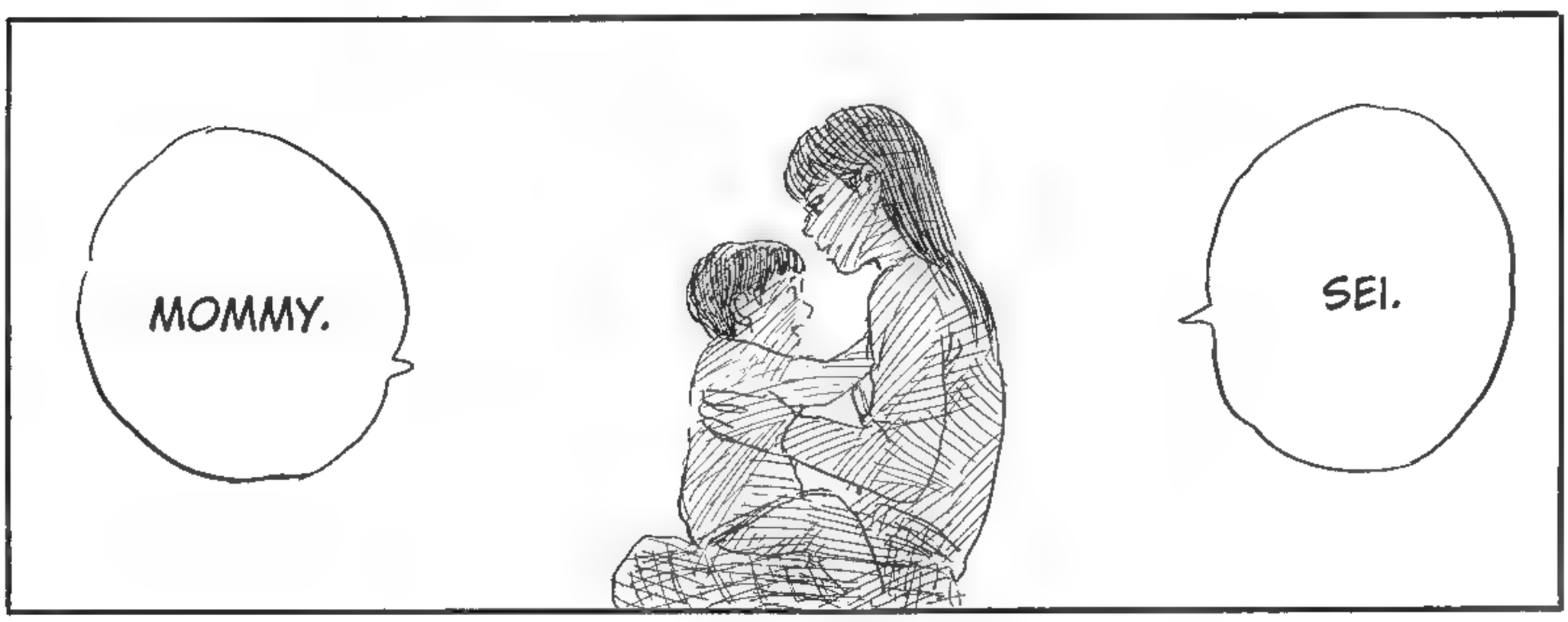


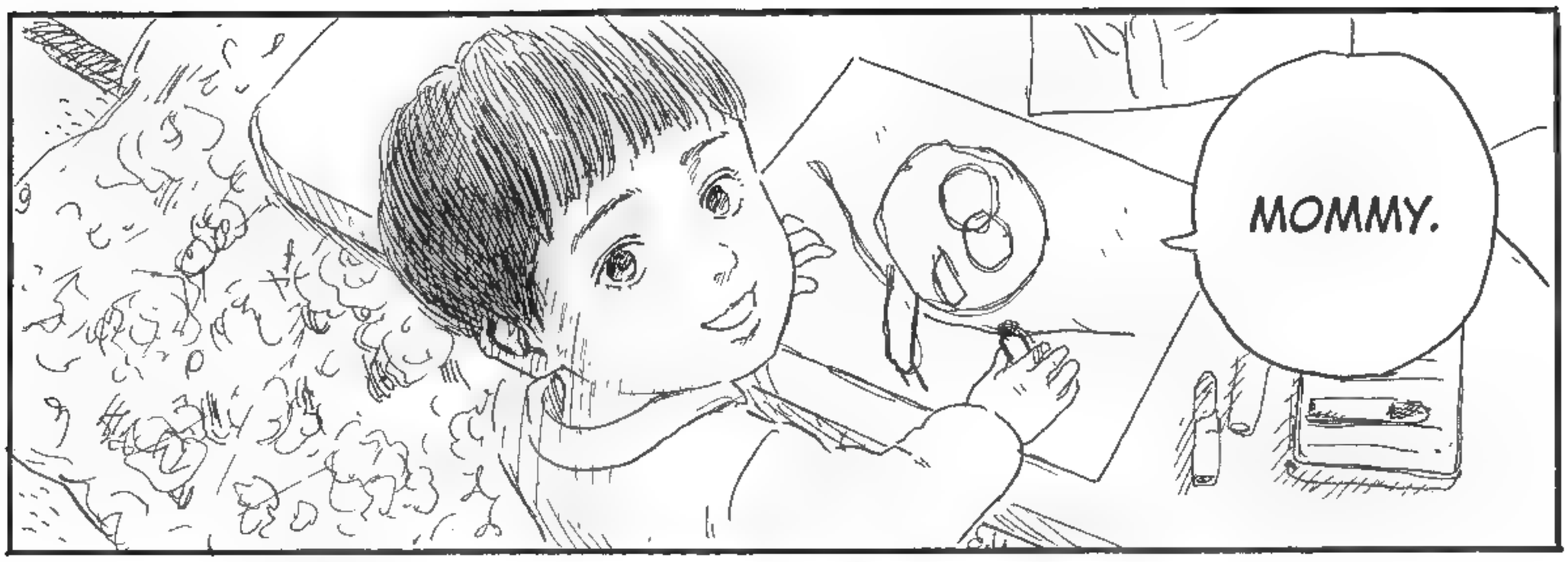
SEI.

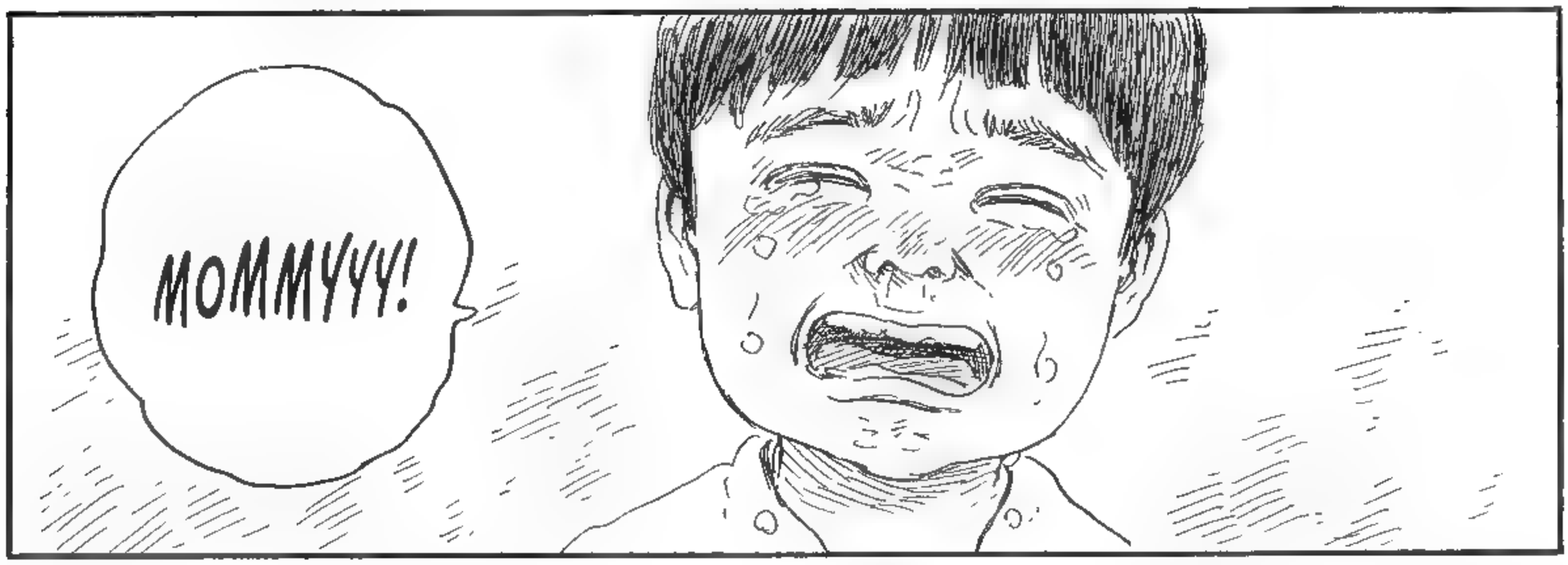


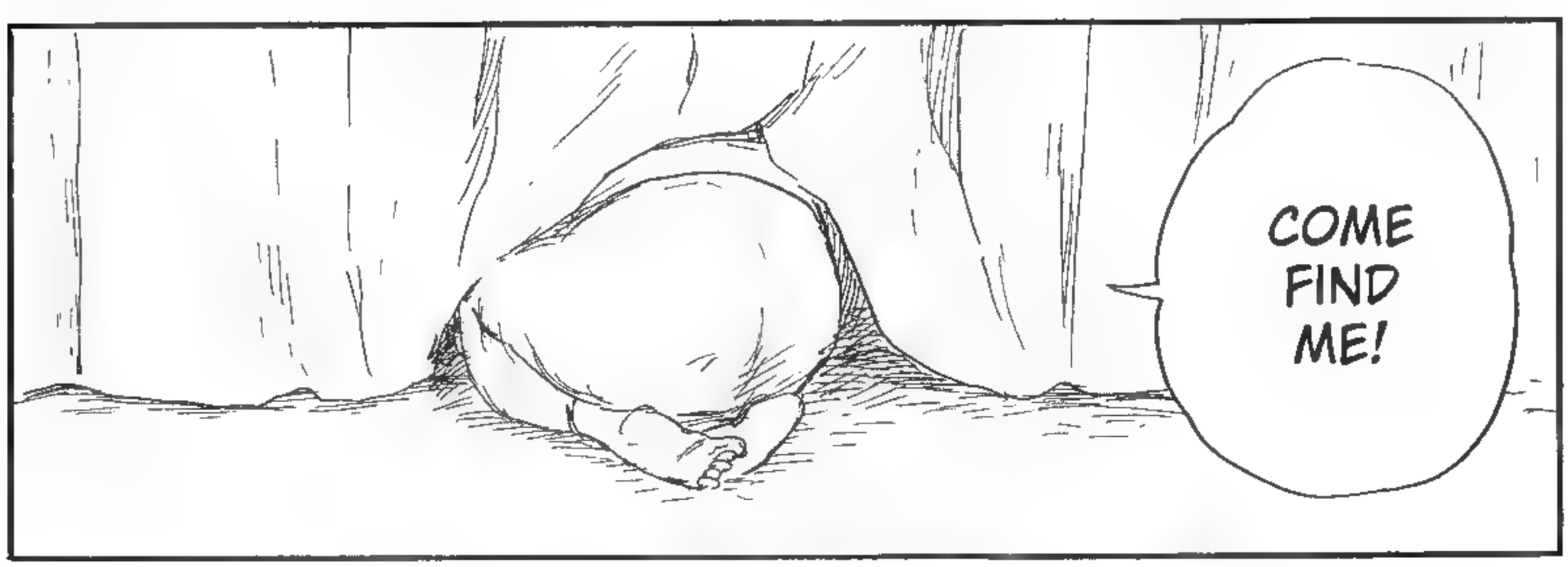
SEI.

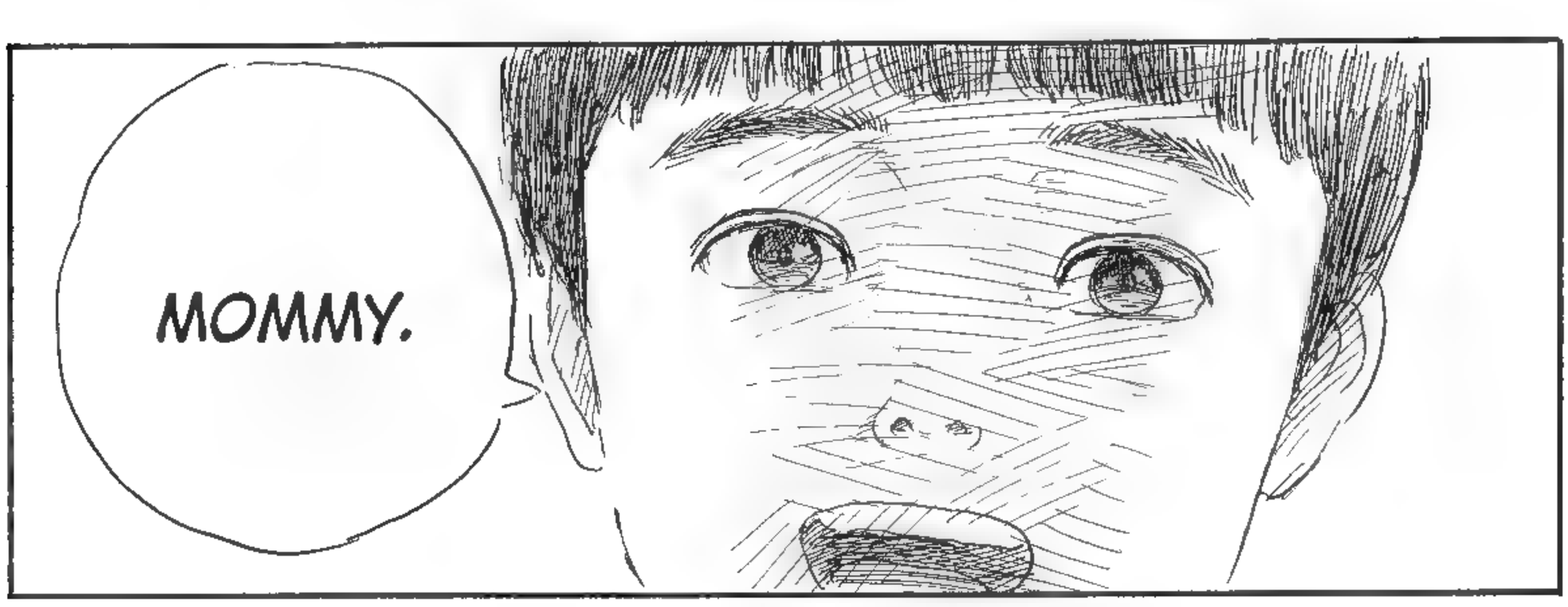

MOMMMY.
...MOMMY.

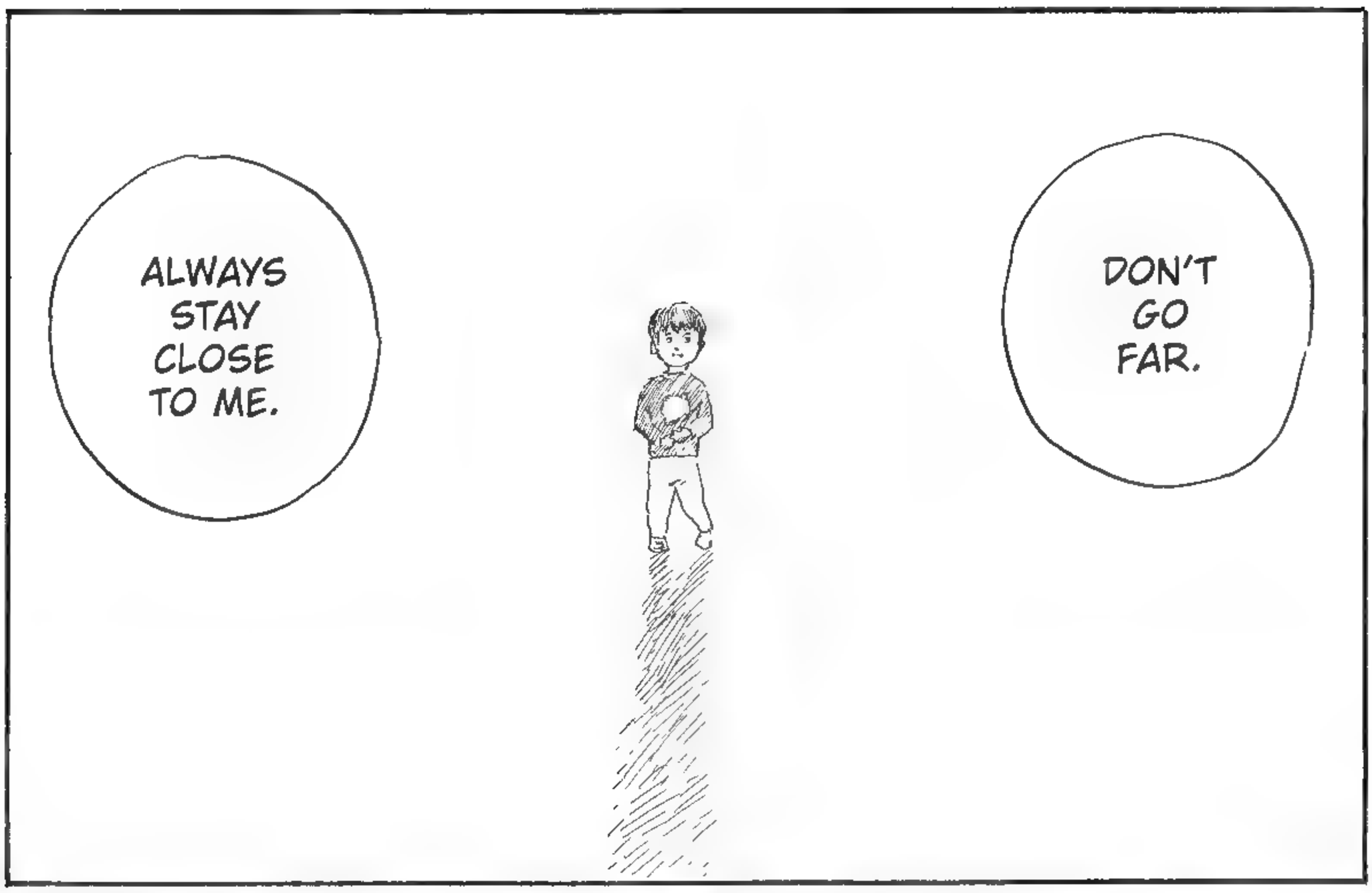

MOMMY.
SEI.


MOMMY.


MOMMYYY!


COME FIND ME!


MOMMY.

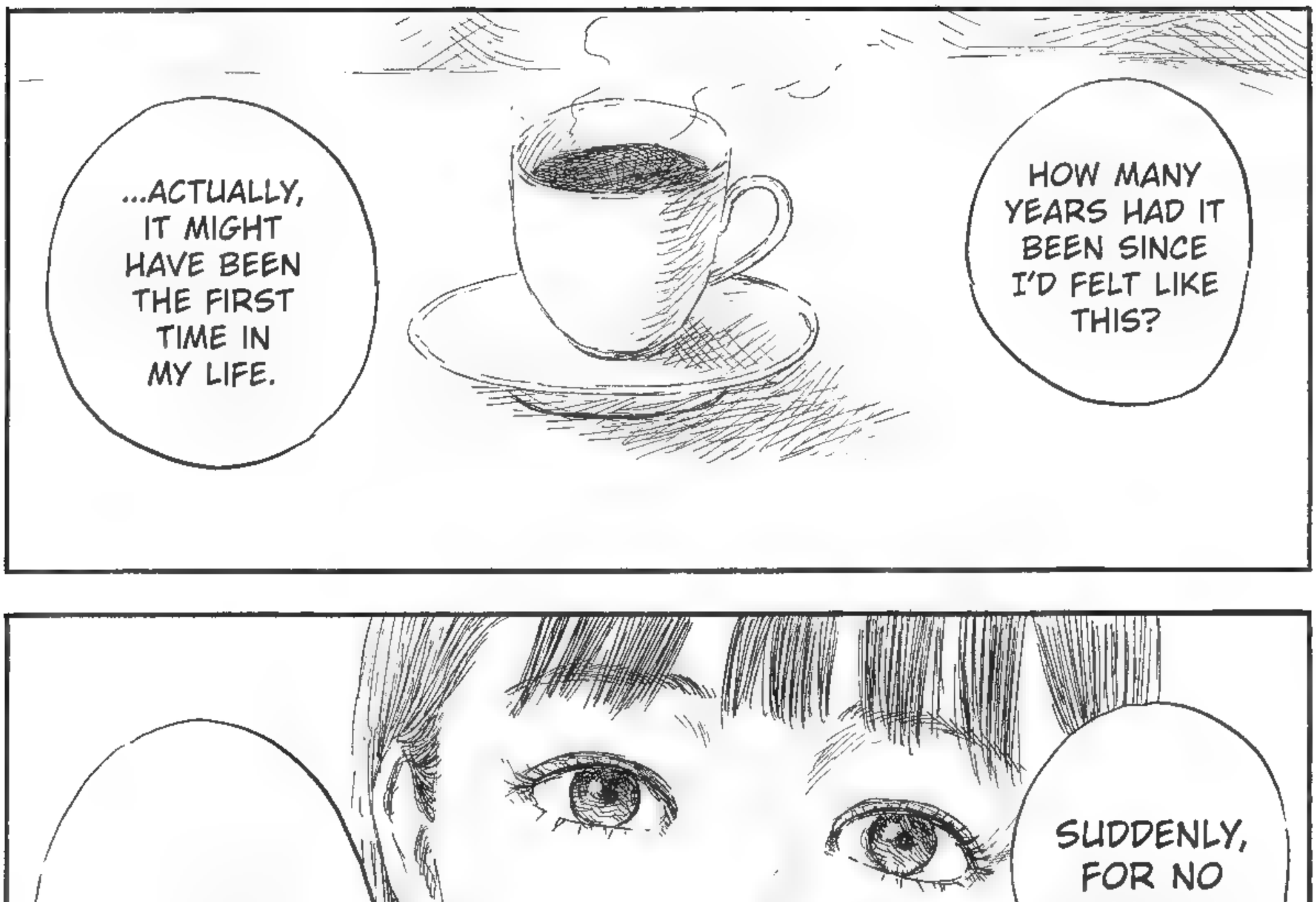

ALWAYS STAY CLOSE TO ME.
DON'T GO FAR.

SEI.

IT WAS NICE AND WARM FOR LATE AUTUMN. NO WIND.

THAT DAY,

I FELT GREAT.


...ACTUALLY, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE.
HOW MANY YEARS HAD IT BEEN SINCE I'D FELT LIKE THIS?
I WANTED TO GO TO *THAT PLACE.*
SUDDENLY, FOR NO REASON,

SEI.

SEI.

LET'S GO OUT.

SEI.

GET YOUR SHOES ON.

WE'RE GOING SOMEPLACE NICE.

YOU'LL SEE.

IT'S A REALLY NICE PLACE.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

THIS WAY.

LET'S GO LOOK.

THERE'S A REALLY NICE VIEW.

UP HERE,

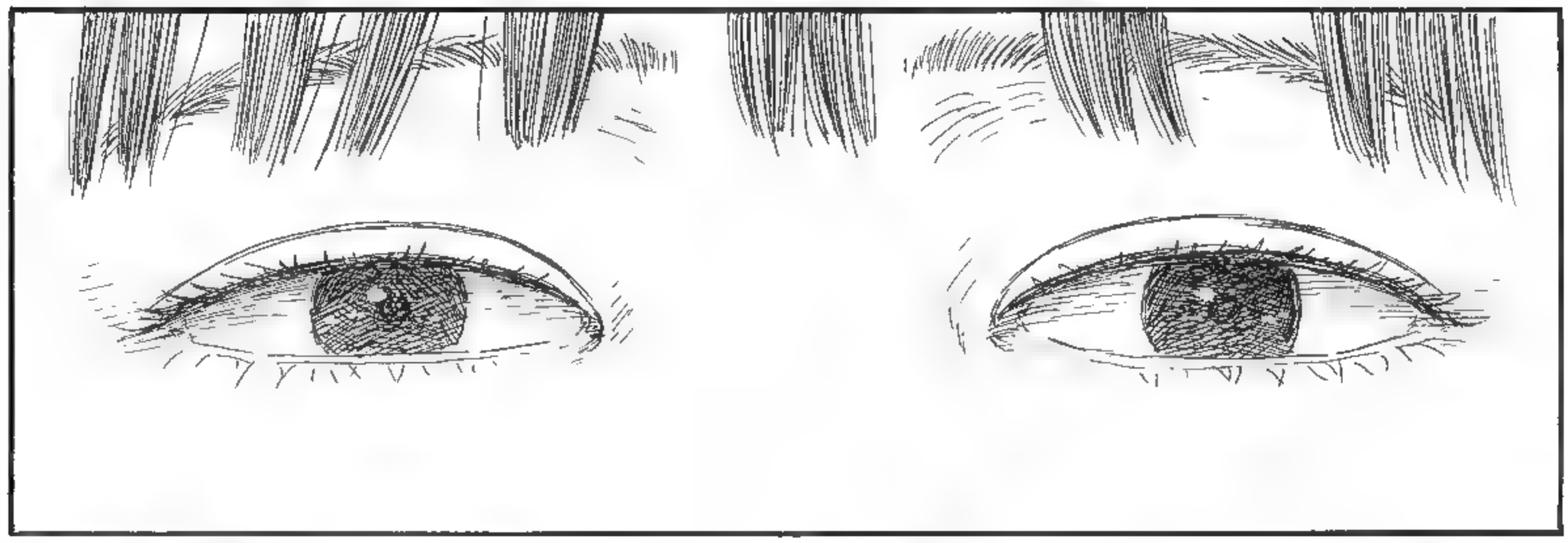
WATCHING MYSELF FROM FAR AWAY. SO FAR AWAY.

THE WHOLE TIME, I FELT LIKE I WAS FLOATING,

HUH, SEI?

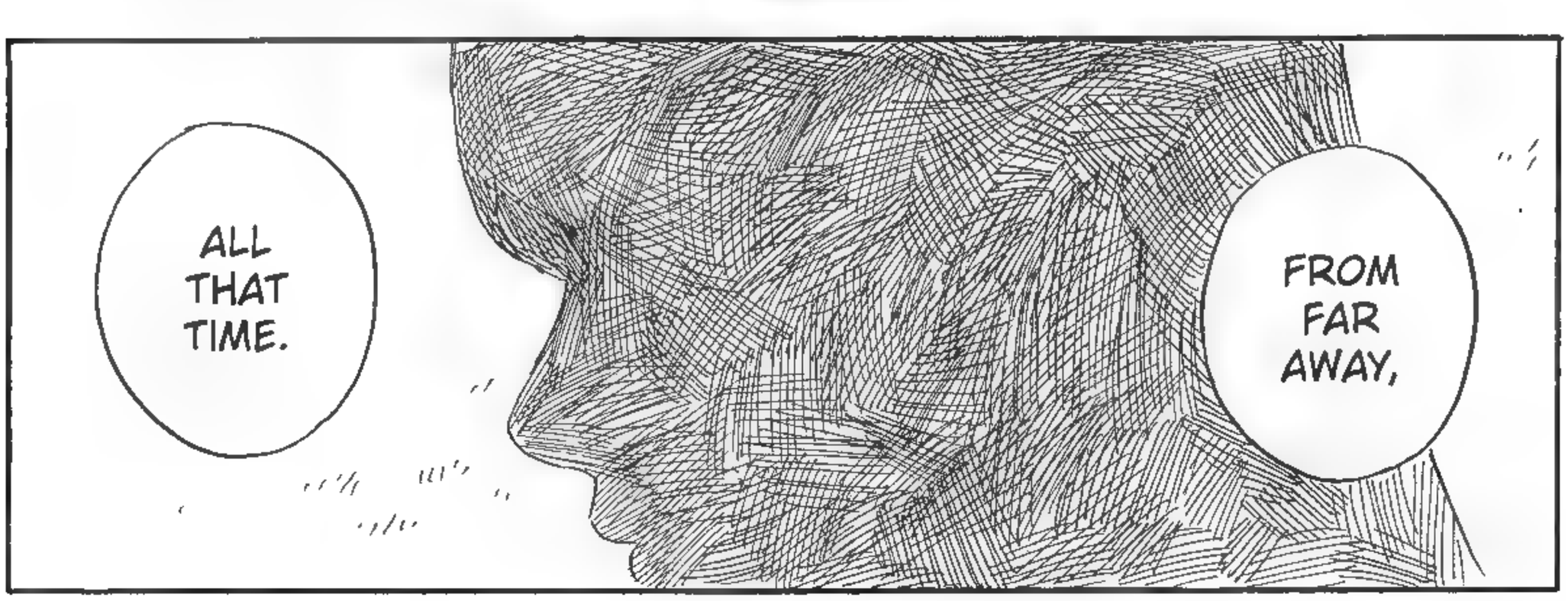
...WE SURE ARE HIGH UP,

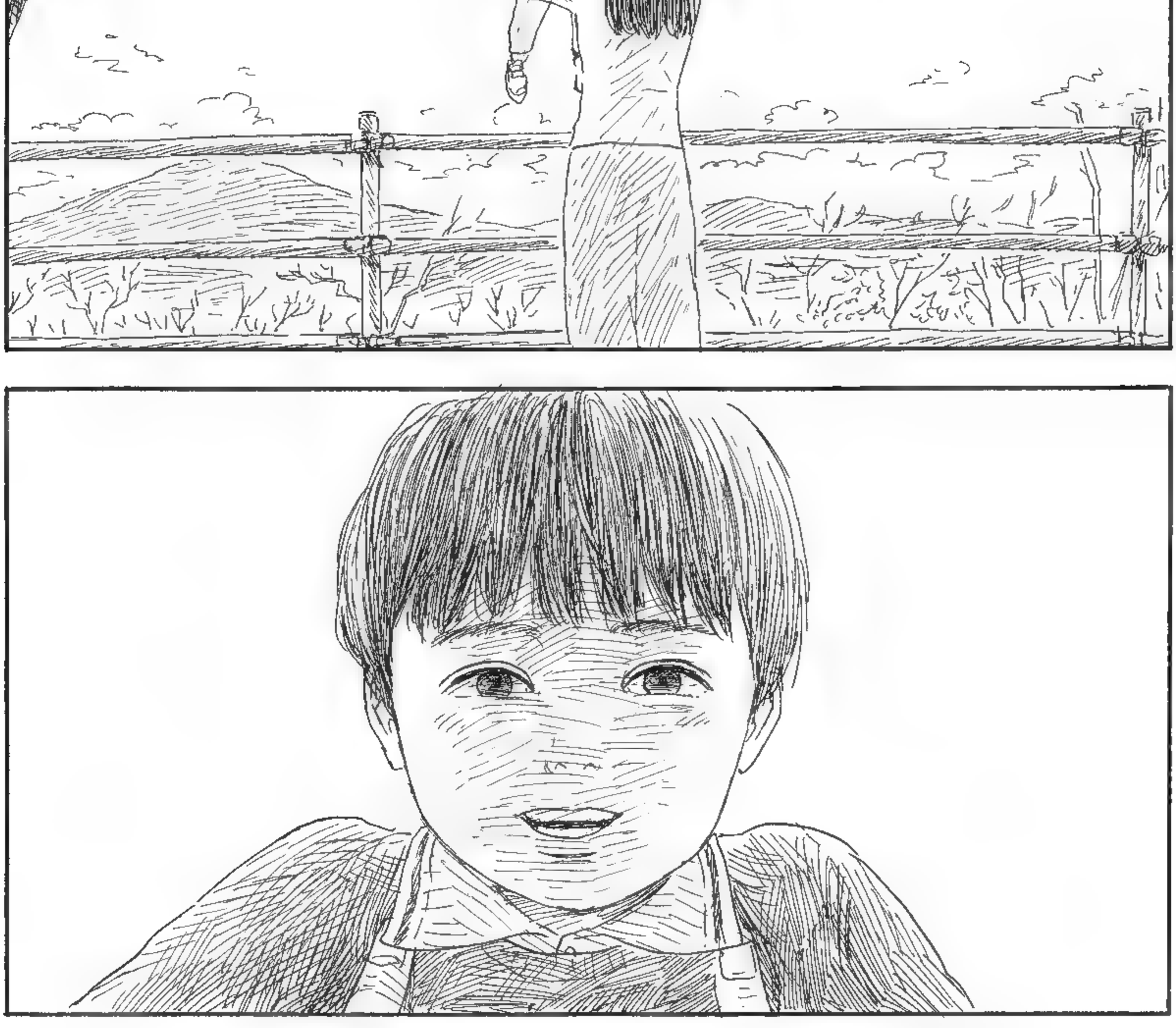
YUP!

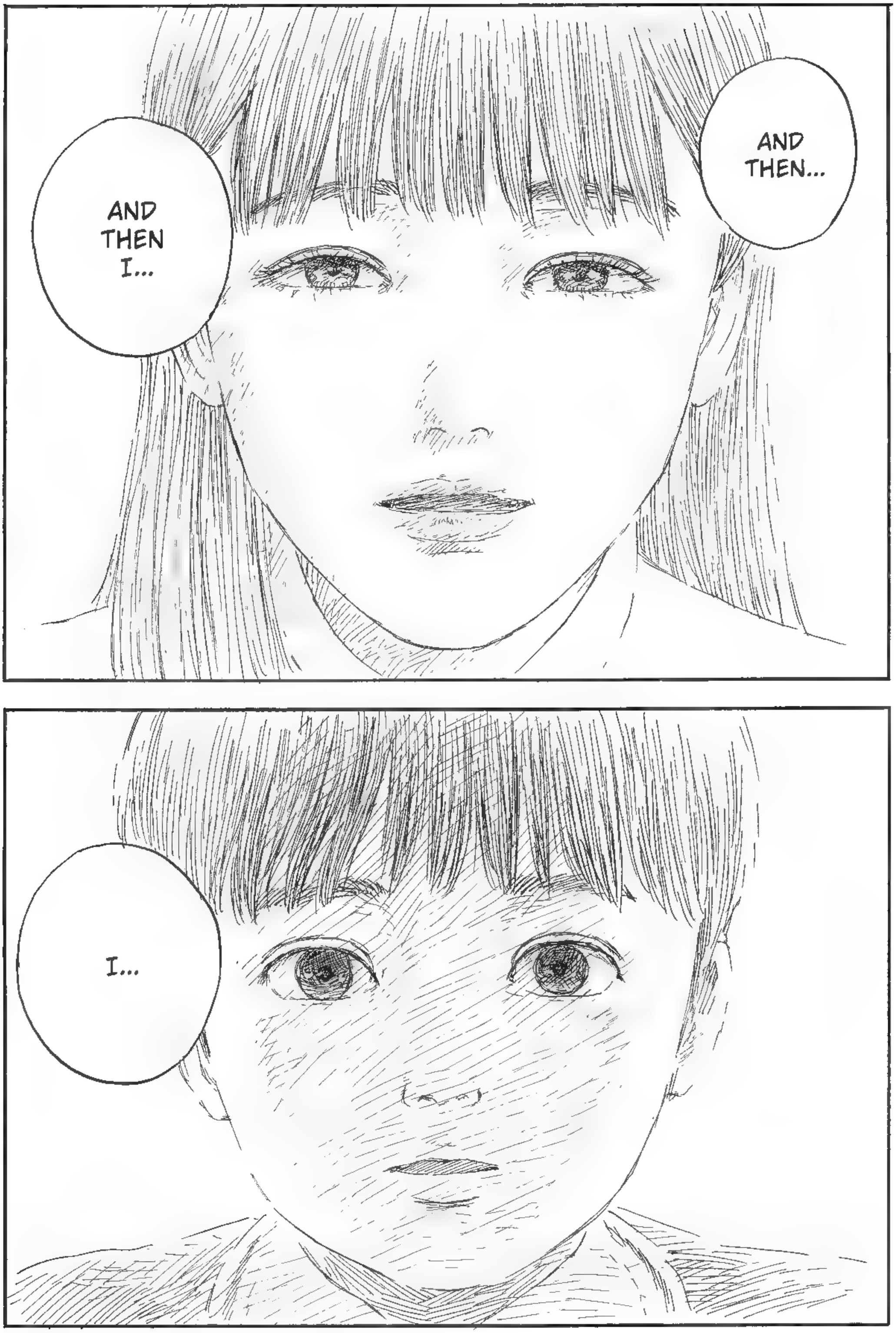


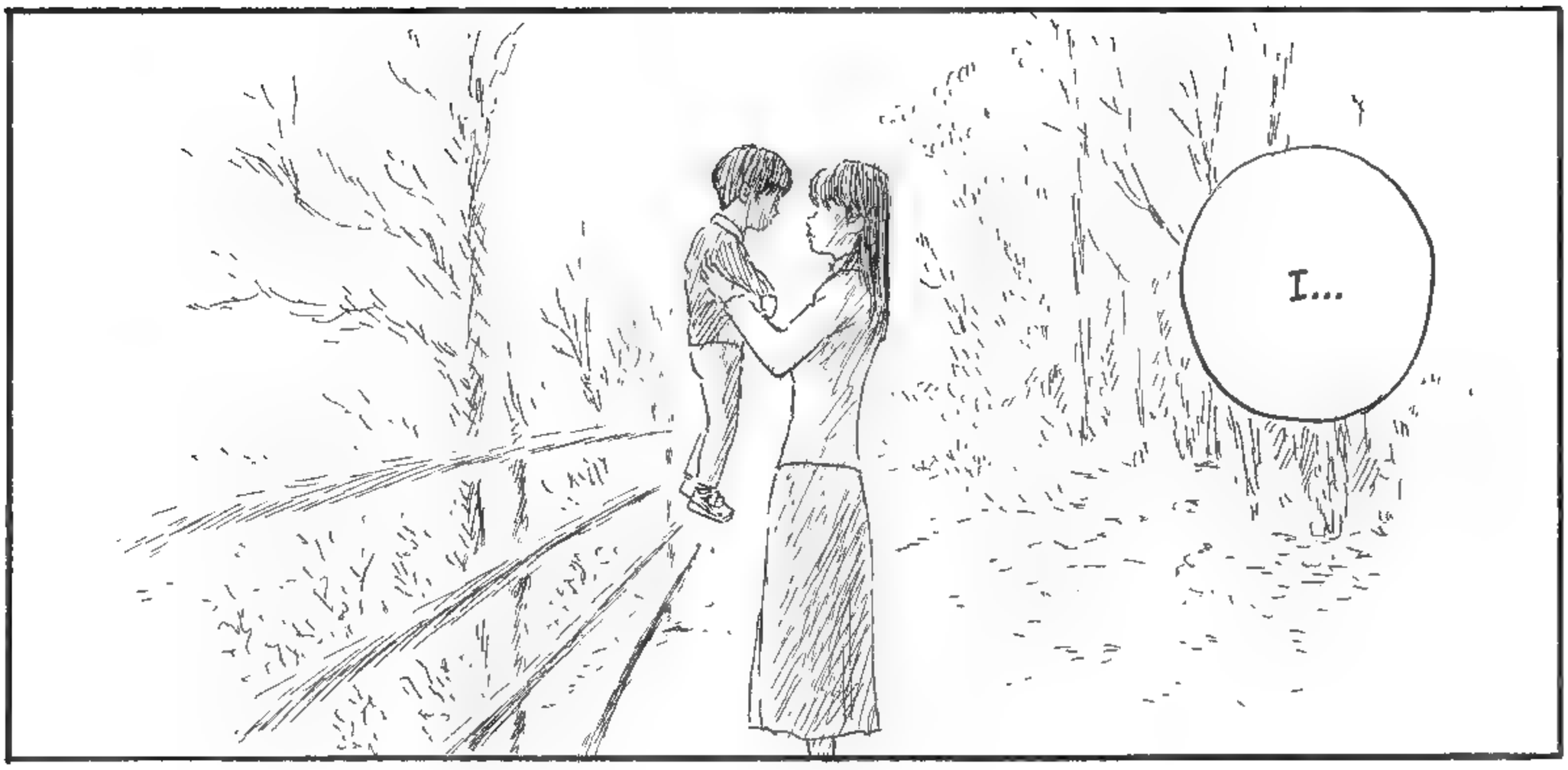
WHEN I WAS LITTLE, TOO.
I USED TO COME UP HERE

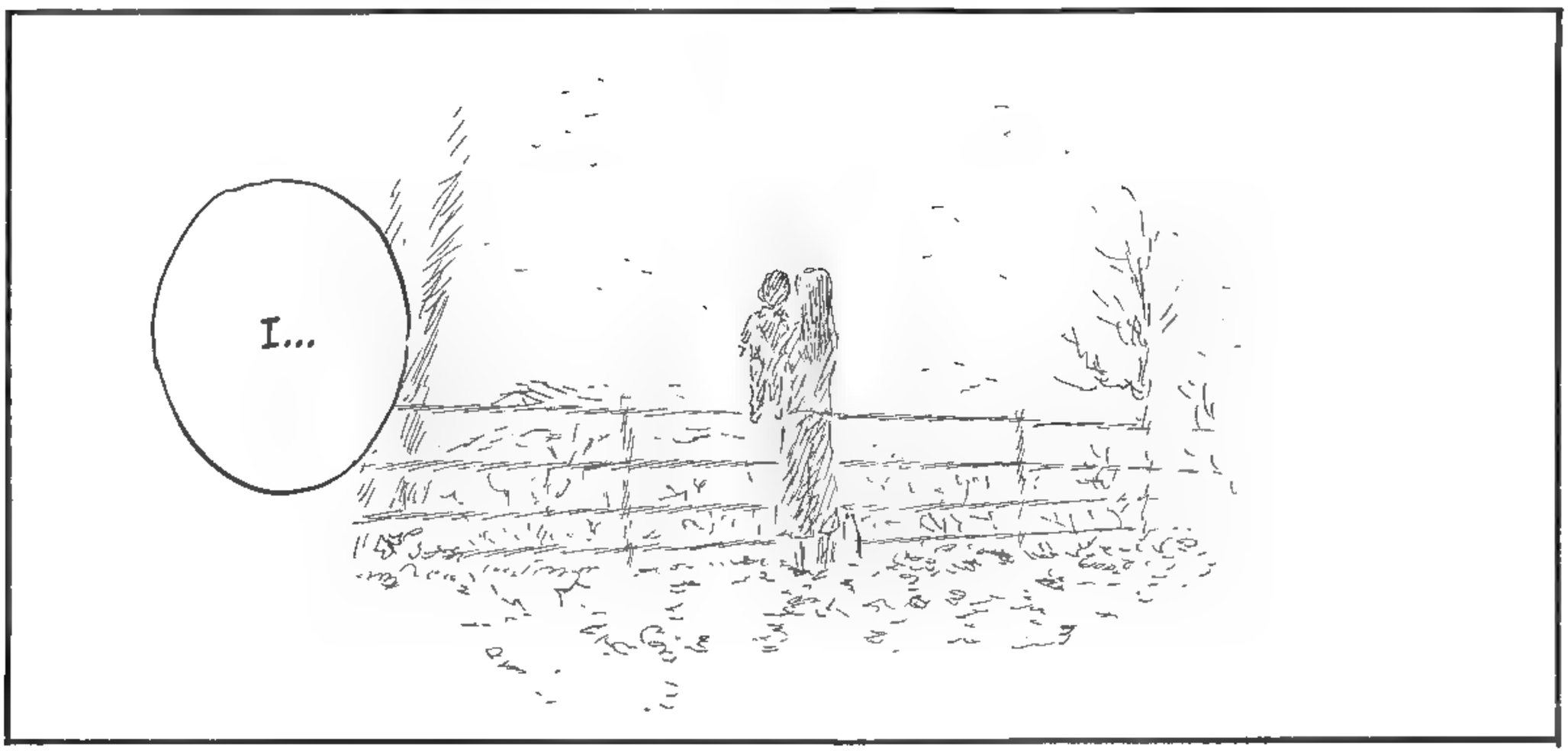
AT THIS TOWN.
I LOOKED DOWN

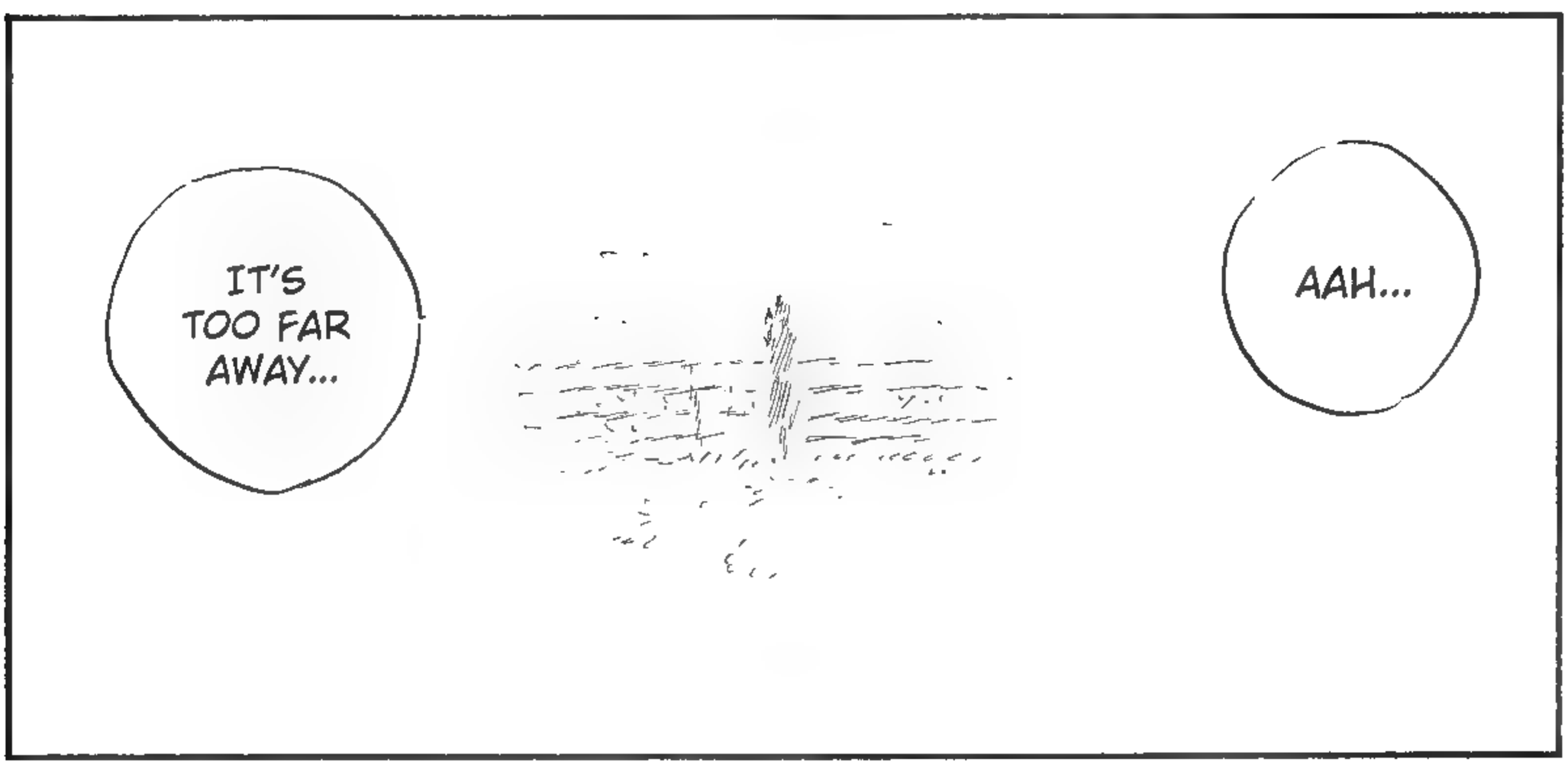

ALL THAT TIME.
FROM FAR AWAY,




AND THEN I...
AND THEN...
I...


I...

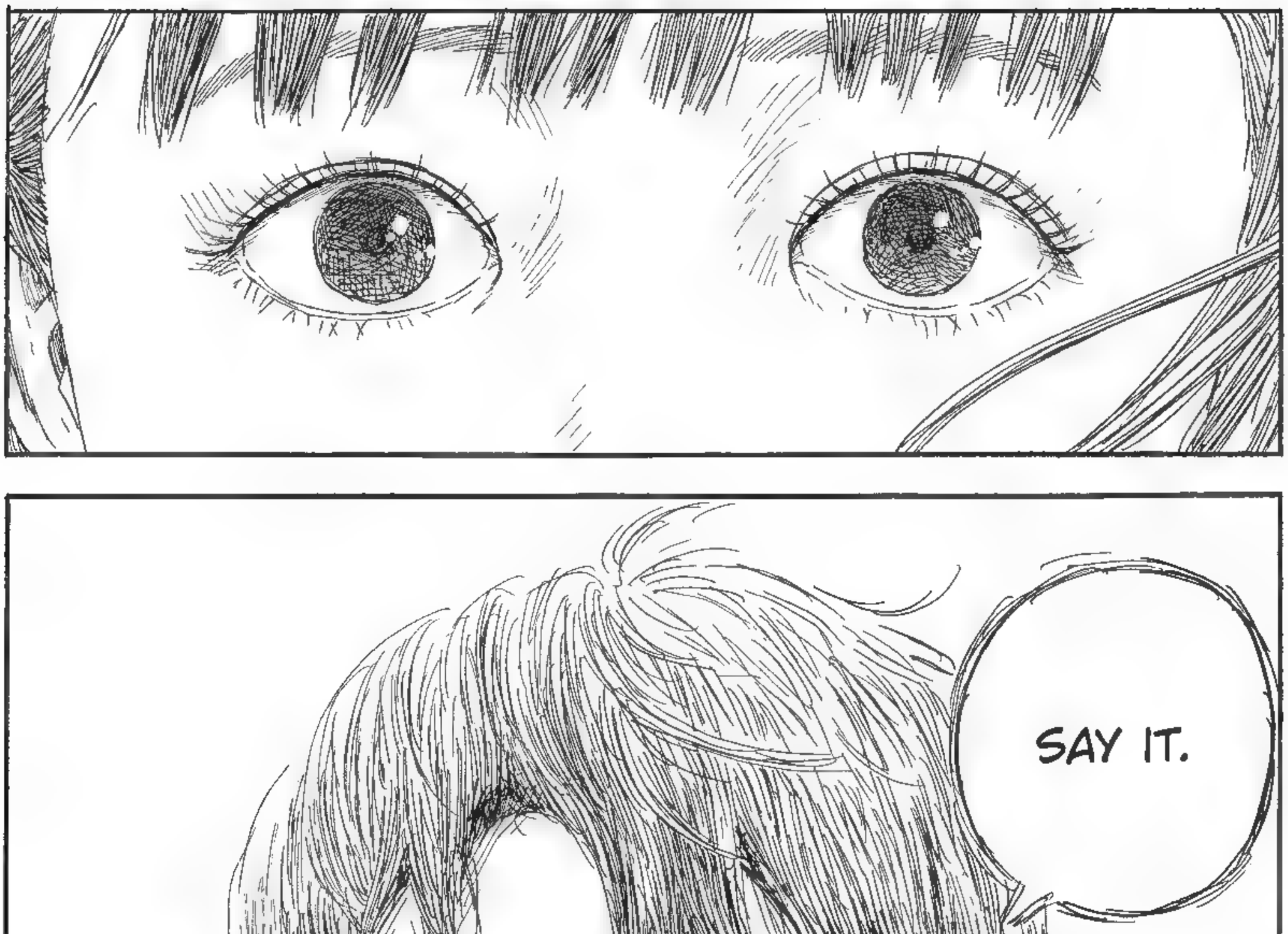

I...


IT'S TOO FAR AWAY...
AAH...

IT'S SO FAR AWAY... I DON'T...

I DON'T KNOW...

SAY IT.


SAY IT.
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

I DON'T KNOW...

...

IT'S ALL JUST... SO FAR AWAY...

I REALLY DON'T KNOW...

REMEMBER ...?

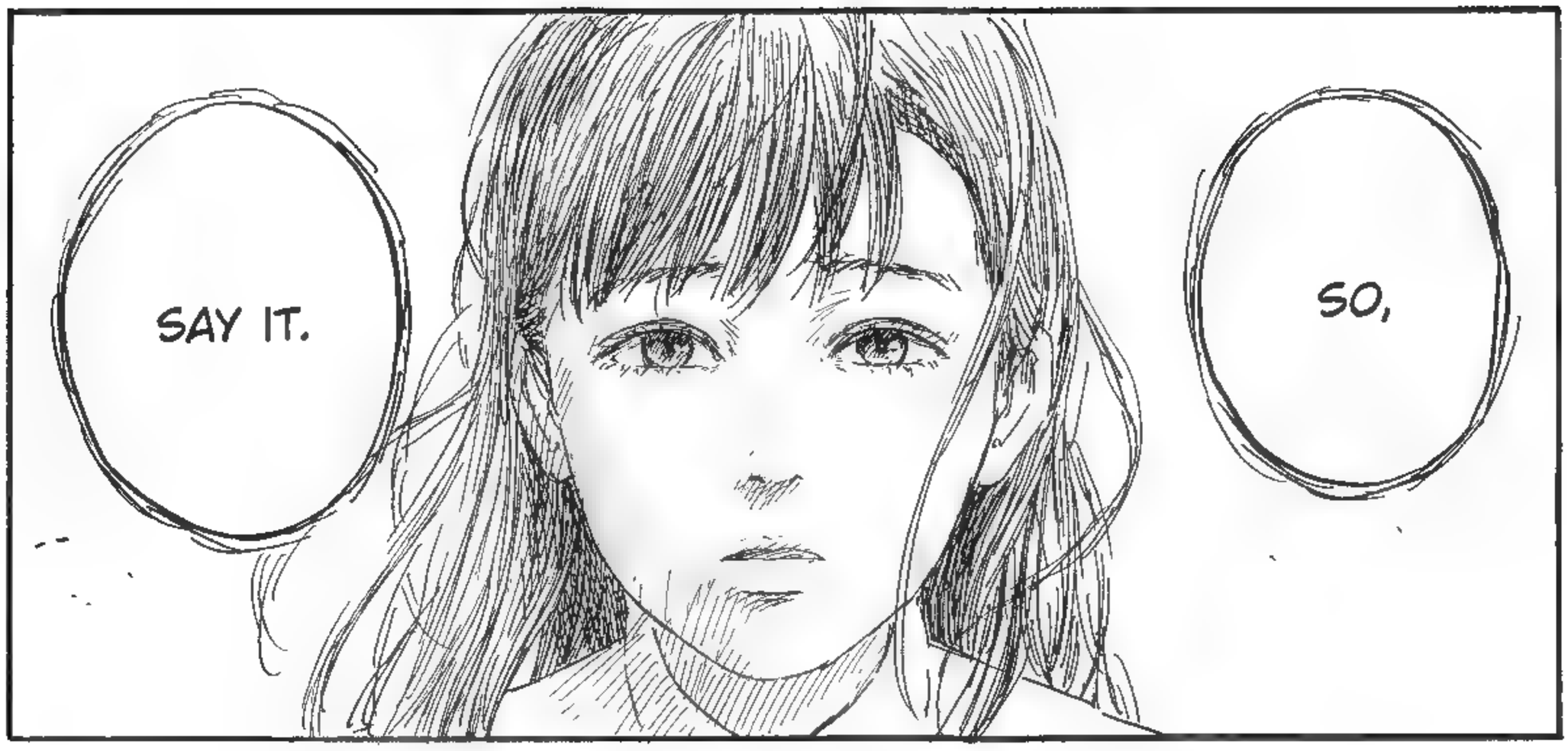
DO YOU...

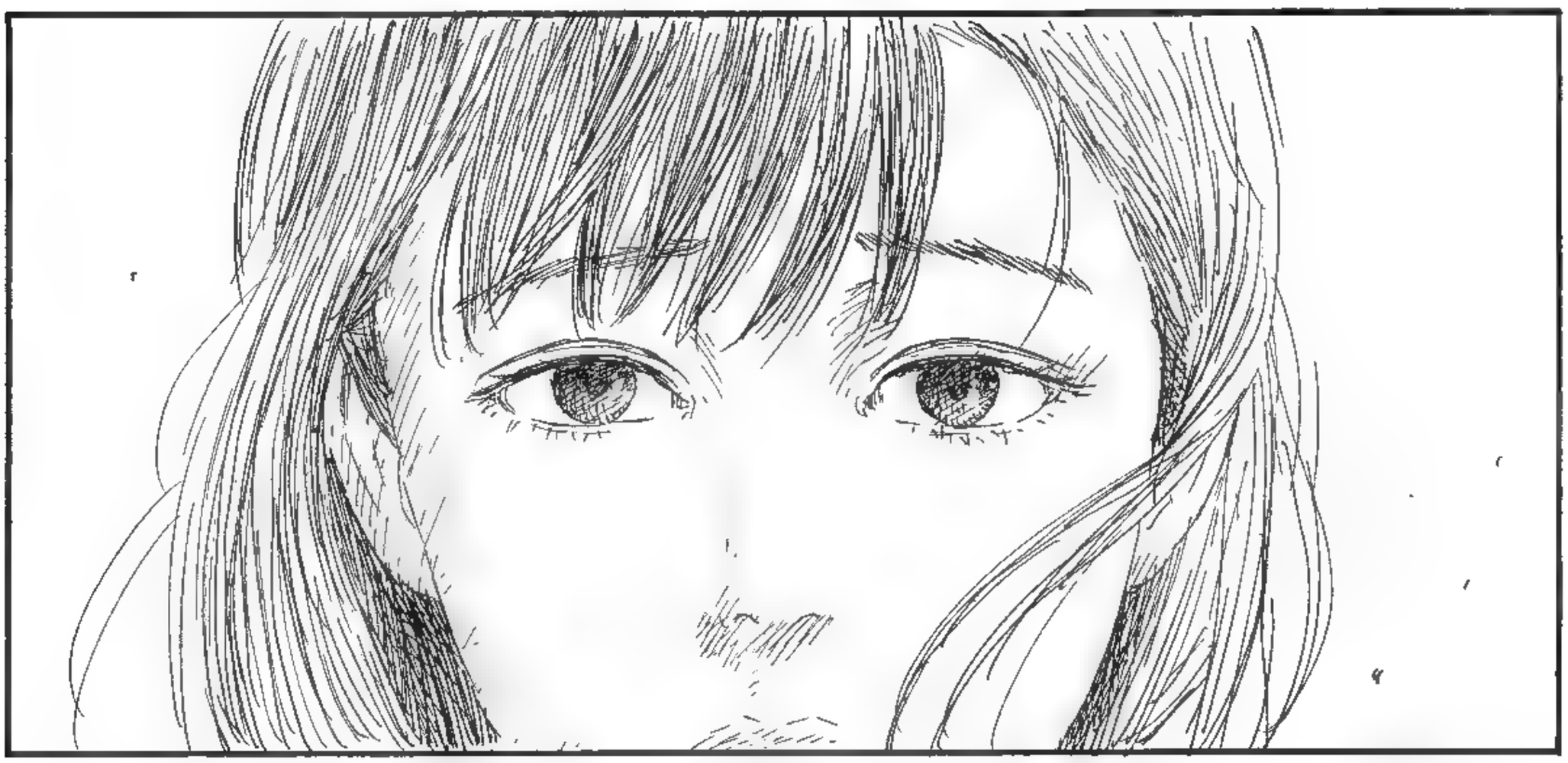
NOW I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE TRUTH...

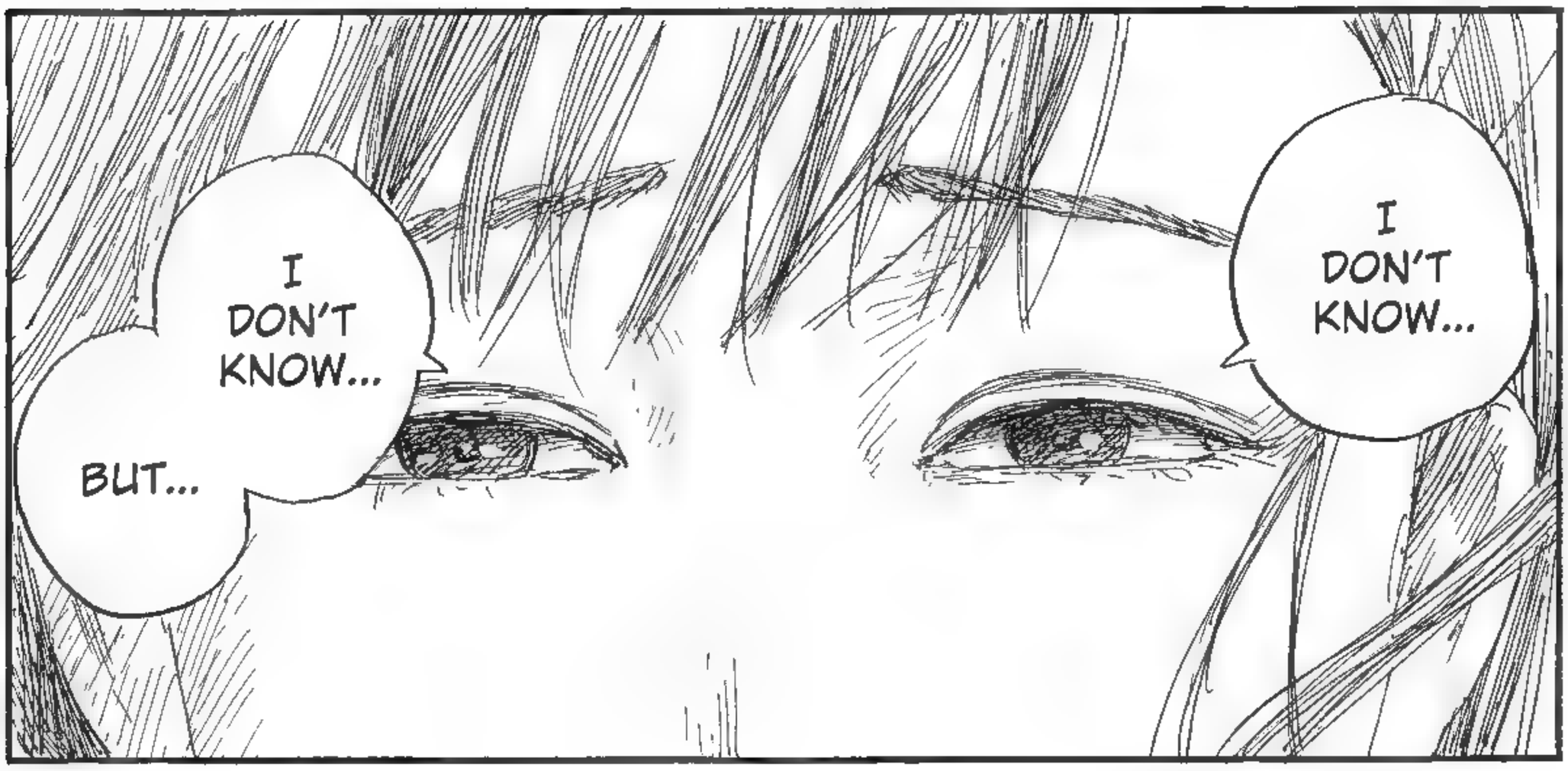
OR JUST... SOMETHING I MADE UP.

I... DID...

BUT...


SAY IT.
SO,




I DON'T KNOW...
BUT...
I DON'T KNOW...

KILL YOU?

DID I

...YES.

YOU DID.

YOU KILLED ME.

Blood on the Tracks

I hear a voice. From outside the room.

For a long time, I talked to myself. To console myself. You could say I've cherished my old wounds so that they wouldn't heal. When they started to, I would peel the scabs, expose the wound, squeeze out the fetid pus, sniff it, lick it, even as it made me dizzy. All the while glancing around for someone who might be watching me put on my pitiful act. Even though there was no one else in the room.

But the voice I hear now from outside isn't mine, it's someone else's. I definitely get that sense. Is it an illusion? Is it really just my own voice after all?

And yet, what am I made of but a collection of things from outside? My mother, my father, the people who were around when I was born, the various people I've met in the course of my life, people I just passed on the street. Insects, animals, cats. The sights I've seen. Light. Sounds. All of these exist as memories within the bounds of this thing I perceive as myself. Now they're afterimages of things no longer here, but still they exist.

That's what I really am. I'm here, but actually not. There's actually no boundary anywhere.

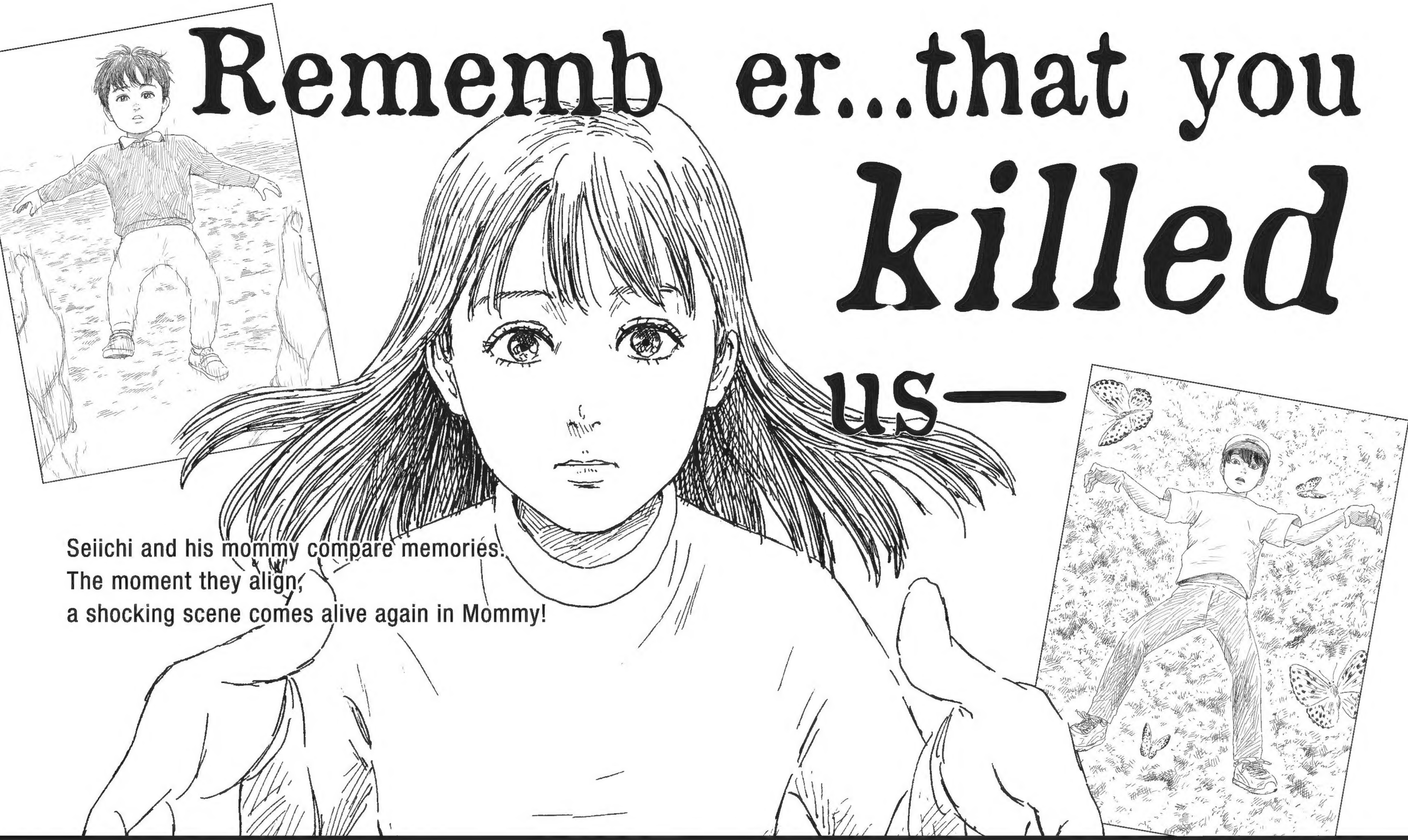
When I listen carefully, I can hear the voice. The voice from outside.

I'll just write down what the voice says.

I'm not made only of my wounds. In fact, I can just let go of all that. I don't have the ability to possess them.

The door of the room is already open. How long has it been that way? From the beginning? I never noticed.

I can go in there. I probably will. Right now.


Remember...that you killed us—
Seiichi and his mommy compare memories.
The moment they align,
a shocking scene comes alive again in Mommy!

Blood on the Tracks

Volume 16 Coming April 2024!!

Blood on the Tracks 15

A Vertical Comics Edition

Translation: Daniel Komen
Editor: Daniel Joseph
Production: Risa Cho
Pei Ann Yeap
Evan Hayden

CHI NO WADACHI 15
by Shuzo OSHIMI

© 2017 Shuzo OSHIMI
All rights reserved.
Original Japanese edition published by SHOGAKUKAN.
English translation rights in the United States of America and Canada
arranged with SHOGAKUKAN through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc.

Translation provided by Vertical Comics, 2023
Published by Vertical Comics, an imprint of Kodansha USA Publishing, LLC, New York

Originally published in Japanese as *Chi no Wadachi 15* by Shogakukan, 2023
Chi no Wadachi serialized in *Big Comic Superior*, Shogakukan, 2017-

This is a work of fiction.

e-ISBN: 978-1-64729-302-4

First Edition

Kodansha USA Publishing, LLC
451 Park Avenue South
7th Floor
New York, NY 10016
www.kodansha.us

Vertical books are distributed through Penguin-Random House Publisher Services.

Published by Vertical Comics
www.kodansha.us
Printed in the U.S.A.
Original Design:
Tadashi Hisamochi, Seiko Tsuchihashi
(hive&co.,ltd.)

AGES 16+

Having finally found himself free to end it all, Seiichi is pulled back from the brink by a telephone call from the police: "We have your mother in protective custody."
Facing Seiko for the first time in twenty years, Seiichi finds an old woman who neither recognizes him nor seems to fully recognize herself. And yet, during their strange reunion, her memories return.
Seiichi's rage erupts, but he cannot bring himself to strike the woman who plagued his thoughts all these years.
And later, the feelings in his heart draw him inexorably back to her side...

Thus begins their long, long night together—and Seiichi gets his first glimpse into the true source of the darkness within his mother.